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A TREATISE OF DIVINE Meditation,

By that Faithful Servant of Jesus Christ

Mr. JOHN BALL,

Late Minister of the Gospel at *Whitmore* in *Staffordshire.*

Published by *Simeon Ashe*, Preacher of the Gospel at *Austins*, *London.*

Joth. 1. 8. *This Book of the Law shall not depart out of thy mouth, but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success.*

Gen. 24.63. *And Isaac went out to meditate in the field at the eventide.*

LONDON, Printed for *H. Mortlock*, at the Phœnix in St. *Pauls* Church-yard, neer the Little North-door. 1660.

TO THE Christian Reader.

THis Treatise of Divine Meditation was penned long since, by that faithful servant of Jesus Christ, Mr. John Ball, who therein intended the benefit of some private friends onely. But Copies thereof being dispersed into many hands, good people of sundry ranks and qualities, upon the perusal of it, were very desirous to have it printed, for more publick use: And because it was known unto many, that this my worthy friend, had committed all his Manuscripts to my trust, that nothing might pass to the Press, with-

without my approbation, I was importuned, as by others, so by the five Reverend Brethren, who subscribed, and sent the Epistle prefixed, that I might receive incouragement by their Testimony, to own the publication of it.

The subject matter is needful and profitable, and the language, with the method and manner of handling it doth speak Mr. Ball *the Author. My leisure hath not given mee leave, with seriousness to read over this discourse, yet upon the credit of the forementioned able Ministers of Christ, who have perused it, I hope that it will be serviceable to thy soul; Which is the desire, and shall bee the prayer of*

Thy Friend and
Servant in Christ,

Aug. 11. 1660.

Sim. Ashe.

To

TO THE Christian Reader.

Reader,

THere is no duty more neglected amongst Christians, than this of Meditation: whence it is, that though the heads of many are swelled with notions, yet their hearts are very empty of grace and good affections. A Treatise therefore of Meditation, which would remove obstructions, and open the passages between the brain and heart, could never bee more seasonable or necessary than in these daies, wherein there is *Multum scientiæ, & parum conscientiæ:* men being much taken up with speculative controversal matters, to finde them discourse; but little meditating upon plain and practical truths,

to affect their hearts, and amend their lives. It is a sad and a strange thing, that there should bee more light in the world, an increase of knowledge, and less heat, a decay of love; that there should bee so much profitable preaching, and yet no more profiting amongst the hearers: one cause whereof doubtless is, the omission of this duty. We must read and consider, hear and consider, if wee would get good by what wee read and hear: without Meditation Truths are devoured, not digested. And as leanness of soul is to bee seen in many through sinful rejection, and casting away of wholesome food; so the like is to bee seen in others, that are fed with such food, for want of good concoctiõ

This little Tractate of the eminently learned, judicious, and godly

godly Mr. *Ball*, is to teach the Art of Divine Meditation, to help thy ſpiritual digeſtion, wouldeſt thou take in the advice herein contained, thou ſhouldeſt finde thy ſoul growing and thriving by it.

Indeed it is a thouſand pitties that any thing of this Reverend Author (humane frailty excepted) ſhould die with him; though this ſmall peece hath ſeemed to lie buried in oblivion hitherto, 'tis now riſen, as from the dead, to admoniſh us of a neceſſary duty, & will again riſe in judgement againſt them, that ſhall ſtill continue their ſinful and ſhameful omiſſion of it.

Though it be *poſthumous*, yet thou mayeſt be confident it is not ſpurious: were the perſon in whoſe hands this Copy lay, as well known to others as to us, Mr. *Henry Baker.*

they would desire no more satisfying evidence than his affirming (as he did) that hee received it from the Reverend Authors own hand.

Thou hast here the substance of the original Copy, without any further alteration, than what the oversight of the Transcriber, here and there made necessary. And though there may be wanting somewhat of that accurateness in this peece, which was in others prepared for the Press by the Authors own hand, yet they who are acquainted with his other works, will clearly see a great resemblance between this and them.

As to the doctrine herein contained, 'tis useful and excellent, and that which few have so practically handled: but they who look for quaintness of expressi-

on,

on, more than the quickning of their affections, and right ordering of their converſations, muſt turn away their eyes; this was not written for them; The excellency of Rules lieth in their fitneſs to direct in neceſſary duties, and thoſe which this book affords, have more of ſolidity than luſtre, of uſe than ſhew.

Let us intreat thee therefore not only to read over this Tractate, but to live it over, leſt thou ſhouldeſt miſtake the end of its publication. And do not think this holy exerciſe is ſuch a grievous task, as that thou ſhouldeſt be afraid of it; 'tis ſuch a duty, as after a little experience thou wilt finde to be not ſo much a burden, as a ſpiritual recreation; and that to preſs thee to the practice of it, is in effect, but to perſwade thee to delight thy ſelf

ſelf with ſitting to the fire, when thou art benummed with cold, or to pleaſe and refreſh thy ſelf with food, when thou art ready to periſh with hunger, nay, ſuch ſenſitive refreſhments are not to be compared with theſe ſpiritual delights of getting a dead cold heart warmed, a ſtarved ſoul nouriſhed by digeſting its food by Divine Meditation. The greateſt difficulty will be in thy firſt ſetting to this duty, which when once thou art acquainted with, thou wilt be angry with thy ſelf, that thou either knewſt, or began it no ſooner.

Courteous Reader, we cannot take our leave of thee, till wee have once more intreated thee to ſet to this duty. If thou wouldeſt be bleſſed in all thy enterprizes or concernments with the bleſſings of God, *Joſh.* 1. 8.

If

If thou wouldeſt have thy underſtanding inlightened with the knowledge of God, thy affections inflamed with the love of God, thy heart eſtabliſhed with the promiſes of God, thy ſolitarineſs cheared up with the company of God, thy afflictions mitigated with the comforts of God; and if thou wouldeſt have thy thoughts, words and works regulated by the command of God, pray and conſider, pray and meditate.

So adviſes
Thy Servants in the
Auguſt 9. *Lord Jeſus*
1660.

Sa. Cotes.
Wil. Reynolds.
John Whitlock.
Robert Smalley.
John Armſtrong.

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A TREATISE OF *Divine Meditation.*

Quest.

WHat doth the word Meditation signifie?

Answ. Those two words in the Original, which our Translators render, to Meditate, signifie,

Primarily to meditate, commune, or discourse with ones self, or which is the same, to imagine, study, consider or muse

in mind or heart. *Psal.* 1. 2. *In his Law doth hee meditate* [a] *day and night*; & 77. 6. *I commune* [b] *with mine own heart, and my spirit made diligent search.* Isa. 33. 18. *Thine heart shall meditate terrour*; & 59. 13. *conceiving* [c] *and uttering from the heart words of falshood.*

יהגה. a

עם־לבבי b אשיחה.

הגו. c

2 And secondarily, To pray or express that with the mouth, which the heart mindeth; either

1 Articulately, *Gen.* 24. 63. *Isaac went out to meditate* [d] *in the field, i.e.* to meditate his evening prayers, and pray over his meditations. *Psal.* 55. 17. *Evening and morning, and at noon will I pray* [e]; & 105. 2. *Talk yee* [f] *of all his wondrous works.* Or,

לשוח d *meditari, & meditata eloqui.*

אשיחה e

שיחו f *colloquimini.*

2 Inarticulately, *Isa.* 8. 19. *And when they shall say unto you, seek unto them that have familiar spirits, and unto Wizards, that peep,*

and that mutter [g]: *should not a people seek unto their God?* & 38.14. *I did mourn* [h] *as a Dove;* & 31.4. *Like as the Lion, and the young Lion roaring* [i] *on his prey.* The former of these two significations being the Principal.

[g] המהגים *qui mussitant.*

[h] [i] Where are words used coming from the same Hebrew root.

Quest. *How is Meditation to bee defined, as it is taken in the former sense?*

Answ. Meditation is a serious, earnest and purposed musing upon some point of Christian instruction, tending to lead us forward toward the Kingdome of Heaven, and serving for our daily strengthening against the flesh, the world, and the Devil. Psal. 119. 23, 48.

Or it is a stedfast and earnest bending of the mind upon some spiritual and heavenly matter, discoursing thereof with our selves, till we bring the same to some profitable issue, both for

the setling of our judgements, and bettering of our hearts and lives.

Quest. *How do Prayer and Meditation differ?*

Answ. They are often confounded in name, but inseparably linked in nature, going hand in hand together; and can no more bee severed, than two Twins, who live and dye together; only in Prayer wee confer and commune more directly with God by Petition and Psa. 42.11. Thanksgiving; in Meditation wee talk and confer more directly and properly with our selves, and with our own souls.

Quest. *What reasons may shew the necessity of this duty?*

Answ. First, It is commanded by God, who hath supream Authority to command what hee pleaseth; is infinite in Wisdome,

dome, to judge what is most profitable for us, and most acceptable to himself; is of great Power to punish our contempt, and abundant in Goodness to reward our obedience. It is his good pleasure that wee should purposely separate our selves from other matters, to think seriously upon some good and holy observation, that our understandings might bee bettered, and our affections stirred to hate evil, and love good.

Secondly, How necessary this 2
heavenly exercise is, may easily be conceived, for that the hearts even of good Christians are too much pestered with unsavoury thoughts, desires and delights of folly, vanity, and much other naughtiness, that they think it utterly impossible to bring them to any better point; and no

wonder if they neglect this duty of Meditation, the understanding of the best setled Christian is dim, his memory feeble, his affections so overlaid with sin, that without much striving hee cannot mount aloft, nor run swiftly in the way of Gods Commandments. So ponderous is the flesh that presseth down, that unless wee labour the thing with our hearts, the word will not stick fast, nor work kindly, nor our affections rise to any good purposes: would wee thrive in grace, and raise our desires and delight in heavenly things? wee must breathe our selves well in Meditation.

3 Thirdly, Would you have examples for the warrant of this necessary practice? Naturally wee desire not to go alone, nor travel in a way which none hath trodden

trodden before us; wee may truly affirm, all godly men have meditated, and the most holy have most abounded in Meditation: This the Holy Ghost reporteth of *Isaac* the Patriarch, [a] *That hee went out into the field towards the evening to meditate*, 63. which had not been so commendable, if hee had not used so to do (being such holy duties should bee often used) herein following his Father *Abraham*, who was the friend of God, and very familiar with him. [b] *Enoch* in his whole life *walked with God*, and had much talk and communion with him. *David* promised to [c] *meditate on the statutes of the Lord*. And what hee vowed, that hee did perform, *Mine eyes prevent the morning watch, to meditate on thy word*. His life was a life of sorrow, before hee came to

[a] Gen. 24.

[b] Gen. 5. 22.

[c] Psa. 119 48. Psal. 119. 148.

the Kingdome, *Saul* hunted him like a Partridge; after hee was incumbred with wars abroad, and the disobedience and rebellion of his sons at home, what time could hee take to commune with God? how could hee quiet his heart, or bring it into order? when others slept, his eyes were waking, and his heart was musing upon God, his word and works; his reins did teach him in the night season. What point of divinity can bee learned without Meditation? not one; for, as none can say that it is his own work, which his own hands hath not made: So, none can count any point of divinity his own, which he hath not wrought by the Meditation of his own heart.

Amongst Christians, who have excelled? such as have been

been most frequent and earnest in this exercise of holy Soliloquies, pressing their hearts to the love of God, and solacing themselves in the remembrance of his love: Even as much odds as is betwixt a young scholar that can onely say his part, and patter over his rules by rote, and a learned School-master that by long practice and experience hath the use thereof; or as there is between a cunning Artificer that can make his own work, and an ignorant Shop-keeper that only sells the same; such or more is the difference between the Christian that meditates, and him that meditateth not; *David* attained to more wisdome, than the Antient, his teachers, his enemies, it was by meditation of the Law of God. Psal. 119. 97,98,99.

Fourthly,

4 Fourthly, The Lord by his Prophet complaineth of the neglect of this duty, *None saith what have I done?* Jer. 8. 6.

5 Fifthly, Meditation putteth life and strength into all other duties, and parts of Gods worship. When *Nehemiah* heard of the affliction of his brethren, and the ruine of *Jerusalem*, hee entred into a deep and earnest consideration of Gods judgements, and of the causes thereof, which were the sins of the people; that thereby hee might bee the more fit to humble himself by prayer and fasting before the Lord[a]. When *Peter* came to himself, and knew where hee was, and from what hee was delivered, and by whom; then hee began with all thankfulness, to muse on the great danger hee had escaped, and of the author and in-

[a] Neh. 1. 2.--7.

ſtrument of his deliverance [b]. *Paul* beholding the ſuperſtition of the Athenians, and finding an Altar which was dedicated to the unknown God, began to pity the blindneſs and ignorance of the people, and to meditate how hee might take occaſion from the inſcription to win them to God [c].

[b] Act. 12. 11.

[c] Act. 17. 23.

Queſt. *Who are bound to uſe this exerciſe?*

Anſw. This exerciſe doth appertain to all perſons, profeſſing Chriſtianity [d]; and howſoever all men have not equal education, learning, ſtrength of memory, ſtayedneſs of mind, ſharpneſs of wit, and invention, variety of reading, opportunity of time and place, &c. yet is no man to bee freed from it.

[d] Deut. 6. 6. 8.

There is none ſo ſimple, or buſie, of ſo high place, or baſe con-

condition, of so short memory, or quick capacity, such a babe in Christ, or so strong a Christian, that can exempt himself from this duty, unless hee purpose to live unprofitably to others, uncomfortably in himself, and disobedient against God.

[c] Josh. 1. 8. [c] *Joshua* was a valiant Captain, a mighty Governour, one alwaies busied in the wars of God, yet must hee meditate in the [a] Psa. 119. 15, 48, 72. Law [a]. Who shall pluck out his neck, when such a man must bear the yoak? what must an holy man, a King, a Warrier, notwithstanding his holiness, dignity, troubles, have the word of God to dwell in him, and bee his Counsellour? what shift canst thou finde to excuse thy self in the neglect of it, when neither worldly honour, nor weight of business, nor strength of

of body, nor courage of mind, nor variety of incumbrances, nor multitude of distractions, shall be held as plea sufficient: art thou a Father of many children, and so pleadest the great charge that lieth upon thy hand? hear what the Lord saith; *Deut. 6.6. & 11.18. And these words which I command thee, shall bee in thy heart*; The more thou hast to care for, the more need hast thou to acquaint thy self with the Law of God, that thou mayest teach and pray for them that depend upon thee.

Thou art Young, and lusty, it is good for thee to bee wise aforehand, and to remember the Lord, for thou must give account how thou hast spent thy daies, thou must answer for the sins of youth[b]. Call to mind what counsel a good Father gives

[b] Eccl. 12. 1.

gives to his Son, a Father that adviſed in love, a godly Father, (who by experience knew that his admonition was wholeſome, a Father moved by divine inſpiration in that which hee ſpake:) *My Son, forget not thy Fathers inſtructions: Binde them continually upon thine heart* [c]. What better treaſure canſt thou lay up in thy breaſt? what ſafer direction canſt thou follow? The word of life is a precious and ſweet liquor, fit to ſeaſon the green veſſel, a ſure guide to lead us in the darkneſs of this world.

[c] Prov. 6. 20, 21.

Wilt thou pretend poverty to excuſe omiſſion of this duty? Oh fool and blind; doſt thou not conſider, and if thou bee oppreſſed with want, thou haſt the more need to ſtrive for grace, peace with God, and joy in the Holy Ghoſt? Thou haſt nothing in

in this world, provide ſpiritual treaſure, and learn what legacies the Lord hath bequeathed unto thee in his holy word.

Wee need not urge reaſons to perſwade old men, who have accuſtomed themſelves to the practice of godlineſs, and by long cuſtome have made that eaſie to them, which to another ſeems difficult (if not impoſſible) to continue the uſe of this exerciſe: for by experience they know the ſingular benefit and comfort of it; They have taſted many times how ſweet a thing it is to commune with the Lord, how profitable to incite, and call upon their ſouls: and though the natural ſtomach be decayed, the ſpiritual appetite ſtill encreaſeth in them [a]. There is none ſo employed, or tied by any ſervice or duty to man, but hee may finde

[a] Pſa. 92. 13, 14.

finde some time, either by day or night, *to call upon God*, to confer and talk with God, and with his own soul in the presence of God, especially upon the Sabbath day, wherein the poorest Artificer, and most painful Plough-man, Prisoner, and Gallislave, must put apart some time, if not to hear and pray publickly (from which hee is restrained) yet to behold, muse and meditate with himself, both of the word, and works of God. Canst thou finde time to eat, drink, sleep[b]? redeem some portion of time from worldly businesse to refresh thy self with sweet Meditation.[c] Is it not better to want thy full sleep, than to deprive thy soul of communion with God? It were a busie day when thou wouldest not a little attend to salute a kind friend,

[b] Psa. 16.7

[c] Psa. 119. 55. 148.

friend, who is come a far journey to visit thee in love: Let no day pass without some conference with God and thine own heart.

Many hear the Word of God, praise the Preacher, wonder at the doctrine delivered, are affected with joy or sorrow; but the godly man treasureth up the Word in his heart, not as a Talent in a Napkin, but as provision in a store-house, which hee bringeth forth in due season. [a] *Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart*, when as others heard them as well as shee. [b] *Jacob* observed *Joseph's* dream, the brethren heard it, but the Father kept it in mind.

[a] Luk. 2. 19.

[b] Gen. 37. 11.

Quest. *What ought to bee the matter or subject of our Meditation?*

Answ. Some good or profi-

table observation gathered out of the Word, or raised from the Works of God, as the Titles and Properties of God, [c] by which hee sheweth what hee is to his Church and People; his Power, Wisdome, Justice and Mercy; also the works of the Most High, as his Decree, Creation, Providence, the fall of man, our Redemption by Christ, Vocation, Justification, Sanctification and Glorification; likewise our own vilenes and sinfulnes, both in general and particular, also our manifold wants, and infirmities; our mortality, and daily dangers, with the mutability of all things in the world; the great and sundry priviledges which weē injoy daily through the inestimable kindnesof God in Christ Jesus; the sundry afflictions and troubles of this

[c] Psa. 1. 2. & 119. 54

this life; and how wee may beſt bear them, and go thorow with them, to the glory of God, and our own ſpiritual good.

It is good to obſerve further, and think upon the vanity of all earthly things, the vain confidence of worldly men, the deſtruction of the wicked, the aſſaults that are made againſt the Church, and how the Lord doth ſtill protect her with his right hand.

In brief, the Word of God is a rich ſtore-houſe of good matter; and the world a ſtage furniſhed with great variety; every day bringeth forth manifold occaſions of Meditation, and a godly mind may make good uſe of every Word or Work of God, of every thing it ſeeth or heareth (whether it bee good or evil.)

Quest. *What bee the fruits, effects, and benefits of Meditation?*

Answ. They are manifold; for it calls our minds out of the world to [a] mourning, or mirth; to complaint, prayer, rejoycing, and thanksgiving in the presence of God. It drieth fleshly and bad humours of worldlinesse, and earthly-mindednesse; it quickens and awakens the dull and drowsie heart, that is ready to bee sleeping in sin, there is no private help so available, to gage, and sift, weed and purge, and (as it were) to hunt and ferrit out of our hearts, swarms of wicked and unsavoury thoughts and lusts, which otherwise will not onely lodge and dwell, but rule and reign in them, and to entertain and hold fast heavenly thoughts, which otherwise will

[a] Psa. 42. 4. & 39. 3.

run

run out of our riven heads, as liquor out of a rotten veſſel. It is an ointment to ſoften our hard hearts, and to ſweeten the bitterneſs of our lives in all inward and outward troubles: It is a ſoveraign preſervative againſt the ſugered baits of worldly pleaſures and commodities that they become not poiſon unto us. Meditation is the ſearcher of the heart, the manure of the ſoul, the foſterer of zeal, the key of paradiſe, the ladder of Heaven, the remedy of ſecurity, the paſtime of Saints, the improvement of Chriſtianity. It enters us into the firſt degrees of heavenly joyes, exalteth our minds and thoughts above the higheſt pitch of worldly things, and imparteth unto us ſome firſt beginnings of the viſion of God; it is as watering to

plants, as blowing to fire, as oyl to aking joynts, as Physick to the sick; It urgeth to repentance, it quickneth to prayer, confirmeth faith, kindleth love, digesteth the word, encourageth in well doing, and refresheth with heavenly consolations.

More Particularly.

1 First, Meditation discovers corruption, and acquaints us with the rebellion of our hearts and lives, with our blindness, security, earthly-mindedness, and infinite other loathsome filthinesses, which neither wee our selves would take knowledge of, while wee carry our selves in many things as good Christians amongst men; neither any other would ever think that so much poison could bee inclosed in so narrow a room, as within the compass of one silly man

man or woman; The vanity of mind,& frowardneſs of will,will ſhew themſelves ſooner in this duty, than in any other. By the hearing of the Law comes the knowledge of ſin, but never ſo clear and diſtinct, as when wee conſtantly ſet our ſelves to walk with God; Let us obſerve what unfaithfulneſs, injuſtice, worldlineſs,impatience,breaketh forth in our callings; what wearineſs, coldneſs, deadneſs, diſtruſt poſſeſſeth the heart in prayer; how full of wandrings, forgetful, irreverent, how ſoon tyred wee bee in hearing the Word, how ſenſeleſs, froward, and hard-hearted under the Rod, and wee ſhall bee forced to acknowledge that wee are very ſtubborn, and rebellious, prone to evil, and averſe to that which is good.

But ſet thy ſelf to think upon

some instruction that hath been taught, or thou hast observed, do it seriously, conscionably, religiously, constantly, as one who desireth to spend all time well, and then corruption of nature will shew it self; Thou shalt soon perceive that thou art vain, ignorant, impotent, proud, worldly, self-conceited, fickle, envious, impatient, unprofitable, an harbourer of filthy lusts, a stiff opposer of sound holiness, passionate, unsound, and what not? Begin to meditate when opportunity is offered, thou art barren, and canst finde nothing fit to bee matter of musing, canst make use of nothing which thou hast heard or seen; hast thou found matter? thou art dull, and senseless, not able to fasten one thought upon it, as is meet, so hard-hearted, that nothing can

pierce

pierce or enter; Thou ſetteſt forward, but art quickly turned out of the way, that thou mayeſt well wonder to ſee how far thou art ſtrayed before that thou couldeſt diſcern that thou haſt ſtepped aſide; ſome idle toy, earthly buſineſs, vain pleaſure, needleſs fear, delightful remembrance of ſin hath drawn thy thoughts another way. Do not theſe things diſplay the poiſon of our evil and corrupt nature?

Moreover, by Meditation wee look into every dark, filthy corner of our naughty hearts, and rake into that ſtinking chanel, which is ſeldome ſtirred: So that when wee ſet about it, wee ſhall bee compelled to ſay, I heard of corruption by the hearing of the ear, but now I ſee it with mine eye; I feel it to the

the great disturbance of my soul. And thus wee are drawn to deny our selves, humble our souls, and seek to Christ for succour and relief.

2 Secondly, It is a spiritual means to purge out sin, and to cleanse the ground of our heart from those noisome, and hurtful weeds that grow in them. No means more available to rince and purifie them, to break the bed of sins, and hunt away the litter of prophane lusts, none comparable to this. For though by the Word wee know them, by conference wee revive the remembrance of them, and by reading wee do both, [a] yet all these run out of our riven heads, and abide meanly with us to suppress our corruption, and to tame our hearts, until wee bring our selves to often

Note.

[a] Heb. 2. 1.

and

and much musing, and debating of the good things, which wee hear and read, that so wee may digest them; and of the evils, which by occasion wee fall into, that wee abandon them: Even as worldly men ponder deeply their affairs, which are weighty. Meditation makes known the hainousnes of sin, inflames the heart with love of holines, cherisheth the graces of Gods Spirit (which are as fire to consume the dross of sin) and rouseth to earnestnes in prayer, to bee set at liberty from that cruel bondage.

Moreover, the conscionable performance of this duty of Application of the Word, with Examination, and Prayer, which is done by Meditation, is, through the blessing of God very effectual, to kill, and crucifie the lusts

lusts of the flesh: The special sins prevented by this exercise. Are,

1. Idle roavings, unprofitable wandrings, unsavoury thoughts, wishes and desires of heart; who groans not under this burden? who is not much hindered by them? They distract in prayer, reading, hearing, and cool our zeal, dead our hearts, waste much precious time, steal away comfort, defile the soul, and bring forth *much* dangerous fruit.

The special medicine to cure this malady is Meditation, it either keeps, or thrusts out frivolous, and idle thoughts and motions, either it prevents them, or keeps them under. The Word hid in the heart preserves
*Psa. 119. 11. from sinning. * When the door is open, and the house empty,

it

it is an easie matter for the theef to enter; but if the heart be occupied in goodness, evil cannot finde room, and harbour; The foul spirit being cast out of a man, seeketh to return with seven spirits worse than himself, [a] but is not able to re-gain possession, till hee finde the house empty, swept, and garnished: when wee do nothing, and withall labour to get no good matter into our minds, wee are sure to be pestred with evil cogitations, arising from natural corruption, or cast in by Satan; but if the heart bee imployed continually in that which is profitable, holy, and excellent, corruption shall not have that strength to molest, nor stir, nor Satan that opportunity to suggest. Hath vanity taken root? To remove it, no means more profitable than oft

[b] Mat. 12. 42, 43.

and

and deep consideration of the swarms of evil cogitations that arise in the mind, to bring them into vile account, to bee weary and ashamed of them, and to endeavour to entertain and harbour better motions and desires in their room. What Christian can endure to have his heart taken up as a lodge, or sty, for froth, filth, vanity, idleness, or folly, that seeth the loathsomeness of it, and knows how, and where to furnish himself with heavenly and comfortable matter? Hee will judge himself, watch, and make earnest requests, never ceasing till the number of idle imaginations bee abated.

2. Earthly-mindedness, and the inordinate love of things temporal, are bad weeds that cover much ground, bitter

roots

roots that ſtick faſt in our nature, ſins that ſet open the heart for Satan to take poſſeſſion, and dwell therein, that make the Word unprofitable, becauſe it cannot have right and ſound plantation, that are attended with multitude of other ſins, and never go alone.

The only means to dig them out of the heart, is Meditation: Look into the vanity, deceitfulneſs, uncertainty, vexation that outward things bring with them, and thou wilt never ſet thy heart upon them. Why do many men lay up for themſelves treaſure on Earth? They know not the glory and dignity of Gods Saints; they conceive not the neceſſity and excellency of ſaving Grace; they never taſted the comforts of a godly life; ſee not the Crown and joy that is pre-

Pſa. 49. 11

prepared in Heaven for them that love and fear the Lord. It may bee they know there is a life to come, an Heaven, an Hell, but their knowledge is dim, uncertain, confused, idle; earnestly, often, advisedly, deeply, they consider not of it: It is impossible that hee should covet great things in this world, or highly prize what is base, and transitory, that hath an eye to the recompence of reward. What wee are in Meditation, may easily bee guessed by our affection to the things that are perishing: Hee that admireth the fading bravery of what is under his feet, hath taken but sleight view of heavenly glory.

3 Thirdly, By nature wee are very sluggish, like unto the Oxe that will not draw, unless hee bee driven, or pricked with a goad. Medi-

Meditation is a spur to quicken us. [a] *The words of the wise are as goads,* if the Word read or preached bee of great force, it must needs work effectually, if wee joyn Meditation. Upon the first hearing, the practice of good works may seem difficult, and unpleasant; our slothful nature will object many things against it; A Lion is in the way; a Lion is in the street; it is hard to bee tied so narrowly, dangerous to follow such courses: But if wee consider the matter more attentively, wee shall see great cause, good incouragement to set upon that work with diligence, joy, and chearfulness; as the mercies of God, the love of Christ, the comforts of grace, the bond of Creation, preservation, redemption, the promise of divine assistance, and gracious

[a] Eccles. 12. 11.

acceptance, the peace of conscience, and lively hope of an Inheritance in the highest Heavens. When these and such like considerations are duly weighed, wee shall finde many, and more effectual provocations to incite to holiness, than possibly can bee to incite unto sin, or to dishearten in any good enterprize.

4 Fourthly, In company wee are apt to forget our selves, and take offensive liberty; to bee idle, loose, vain in speeches, pettish in behaviour.

The reason is, because wee are not stored with good matter, wee have not seen into the manifold imperfections of our hearts, nor tried in secret how wee can master and overcome corruptions. Whereby the necessity of Meditation is manifest, that

that gaging the heart thorowly, and fighting againſt ſin at home, wee might bee more watchful in company, leſt wee ſhould bee overtaken, and better enabled to reſiſt; for as hee who goeth to war, is firſt trained, and made fit to uſe his weapon at home, and the ſcholar tryeth maſteries privately, before hee come forth to diſpute openly; ſo muſt a good Chriſtian try what hee can do againſt his affections, & luſts, alone by himſelf, in his ſolitary Meditation, and reſolve againſt them (accordingly as hee ſeeth the difficulty to require) before hee can in his common dealings with all ſorts and companies, bee ſtrengthened againſt temptations, and falls, and free from offence-giving in his words and deeds.

5 Unbeleef, and hardneſs of

heart, are evils no less dangerous than common, to the godly that feel them, to the ungodly that are insensible, a curse, a judgement, that cannot sufficiently be lamented.

The special remedy is earnest communication with our selves, and with the Lord in secret. How doth the heart relent when wee set our selves in the presence of God, to record our disobedience with shame, and sorrow; and when wee call to remembrance our mortality, the day of death, the coming of Christ to judgement, the favours of God, the love of Christ, his most bitter death and passion? Hardness of heart cometh from want of due consideration. [a] Tenderness follows Meditation, as contraries are cured by their contraries. To chide

[a] Mark 6. 52. & 8. 17, 18, 19, 20, 21.

the

the heart for sin, and force it by strong reasons pressed again and again upon the conscience, is effectual to break and rent it, as hard stroaks with beetle and wedges are to cleave the knotty Oak. They that look up to Christ, will mourn over him. To stock up infidelity, and to plant the word of promise, what means to Meditation? [a] when wee consider the power, goodness, unchangeableness of the Lord, his free grace, rich mercy, and constant truth, how hee dealt with his servants in former times, and hath holpen us in the day of our calamity, doth not the heart rise in indignation against distrust? To check and reprove dejectedness of spirit, and to stir up our selves to wait and trust in the Lord, is a ready way to get freedome from

[a] Psa. 77. 9, 10, 11, 12.

distracting thoughts that overwhelm and oppress the soul?

3 Thirdly, Meditation may be called the beginning of all sound Reformation; when will men turn from their sins with an holy resolution to cleave unto the Lord in all things? Never till they come to their right mind, and bethink themselves. [b] They may promise fair in sickness, conceive some purposes of amendment upon the sight or hearing of judgement denounced against their bosome sin; but all this abides meanly with them to break the heart, or change it from those sinful delights wherewith it was bewitched. They must remember, and weigh what they have done, before they can rise out of the miry-puddle into which they are fallen [c].

[b] Hos. 7.2. Jer. 5.24. Luk. 14. 28. & 15. 17. Mark 14. 72. Psal. 4. 4.

[c] Jer. 8. 6. Rev. 2. 5.

4 Fourthly, Hereby well-grounded

grounded and working knowledge is attained, encreased; without understanding wee cannot begin this exercise, but wisdome is begotten and confirmed by it. [d] They that hear often, read much; but live not in the exercise of Meditation, and digest not what is brought to their minds by outward means, they continue still in darkness, or hang upon the credit of their teachers; at the best, their knowledge is less profitable to themselves and others, as that which swimeth in the brain, but is not kindly rooted in the heart. In earthly occasions, wherein wee are sharper sighted than in spiritual, wee conceive not a matter at the first hearing; the more we think upon it, the better wee come to know it. In spiritual things often reviewing the same thing

[d] Psa. 119. 92, 93, 99.

is most requisite. It is Meditation that settleth the truth in the judgement, assureth it to the conicience, and firmly groundeth it in the heart, that it becometh a behooveful word, ready in the time of need, and ruling over the whole man, with an universal, milde, and gentle soveraignty. It may bee added, that if wee meditate of what we hear, wee shall see more into the truth, use, and benefit of what is taught, than hee that preacheth. Surely there is no doctrine so plain, or work so small, but great good might bee gathered, much learned out of it, by study and diligence.

5 Fifthly, What an help this is to strengthen memory, all men know by continual practice. Doth not the light of reason teach us, to call that oft to mind

mind which wee would not have to overslip us. *I will meditate on thy statutes, and will not forget thy Word.* The Saints of God know it is needful to grow in wisdome, and to retain what they have learned: but look how necessary it is to bee filled with wisdome, and to hold [a] fast what wee have received; so needful it is to repeat again and again, and to bethink our selves of what hath been commanded and commited to our custody: Defect of memory is best supplied by Meditation. Psal. 119. 15, 16. [a] Heb. 2. 1, 2.

Sixthly, * Meditation enlargeth delight in goodness: much blowing will make the fire to burn under green wood. Our nature desires liberty, and goodness is burdensome to the flesh, 6

* *Quo magis aliquid per contemplationem nobis innotescit, eo magis in illius amorem erar descimus & quo magis aliquid amamus, eó frequentius de ipso cogitamus.*

but

but if wee accustome our selves to minde, and muse, and think upon the word, until it be made our own, it will be *pleasant to our taste, sweeter than hony, or the hony comb.* Familiarity is the best Nurse of Friendship, better than good turns: Even as looking breedeth loving: so when by the thought of mind wee look upon good matters, there is a love of them bred in us; for affections kindle on a thought, as tinder doth when a spark lighteth on it. The most vehement love doth wax cold for want of communication; and the coldest affections are inflamed by conversings, and intercourse of speech.

Psa. 119. 23, 24.

Note.

7 Seventhly, Meditation is a gracious means to ease and refresh the mind (wearied in worldly businesses.) It seasoneth our

our meat, sleep, labours. Oh how sweet and pleasant a thing it is to come into the presence of God, to record his mercies, to solace our souls in the remembrance of his love! This is the place of rest after a toilsome journey; the cool shade to the weary labourer; the waterbrooks to the panting Hart: No mirth, no melody is to bee matched to it: The joy and comfort of the Spouse in the presence of Christ is a matter incredible to the carnal heart, who never tasted of the refined Wines, and fat things in the house of God. Psal. 139. 17, 18. Psal. 42. 1. Psal. 63. 5, 6.

Eighthly, Take away Meditation, and the duties of Religion lose their life and vigour; Prayer is cold, reading unprofitable; Think daily with thy self what great honour it is to bee 8

bee the Son of God, what unspeakable joy to possess assurance that our sins are pardoned, how unvaluable a prerogative to lay open thy cares into the bosome of the Lord; perswade thy self of his readiness to hear, mercies to forgive, and compassions to relieve them that ask in his Sons name. These things will stir up intention and fervency in prayer; with what sighs and groans will hee confess and bewail his iniquity, who with a single eye doth behold the filthiness of sin, and look into his own estate? But lay aside Meditation, and all is turned into form, comes to bee of little use; For the appetite will decay, if it be not sharpened, desire will cool if it bee not quickened. Meat received into the mouth, and spit forth again presently, nourisheth not;

not; Seed must bee covered, as well as cast into the ground. Reading benefits little without Meditation (which is to the Word what chewing and digestion is to meat that should feed the body.) 1 Tim. 4. 15.

Ninthly, Frequent and daily repetition, and regard of heavenly things, brings us to better and more inward acquaintance with God, most comfortable fellowship and communion with him. The more wee speak and converse with a man, the better wee know him, the further wee see into his worth, faithfulness, and excellency. So doth communing with God lead us to the sound and comfortable knowledge of his Majesty. This is the fruit of holy musing, than which, what can give more joy and comfort? what knowledge 9

so

so delightful to the mind, as the knowledge of God in the face of Christ, in whom the Father hath revealed the treasures of his wisdome, the riches of his grace, long-suffering, and mercy? Nothing can revive the soul so much as the feeling of his love, and the assurance of his fatherly care over us. Lord lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us, & we shal be safe.

10 Tenthly, To call to remembrance the Lords mercies of old, and his free promises that never fail, is a singular ease and refreshing in the time of temptation; when Satan doth sift and winnow us with *temptations*, and terrours within, and troubles without. *I remembred thy judgements, O Lord, and was comforted:* *I will never forget thy precepts, for by them thou hast quickened mee.*

Psa. 77. 5, 6, 11, 12.
Psa 145. 5.
Psal. 119. 52.
Psal. 119. 93.

Eleventhly,

Eleventhly, As the mind is, such is the life; for that is the fountain of actions (whether good or evil) if the mind bee pure, the life is holy, if the mind bee defiled, the actions cannot bee upright; Wouldest thou live a Christian life, and injoy those great liberties which God affords to his children in this life? then thou must scatter the bed of disordered cogitations, and nourish godly desires, and motions in their room; meditating on the Law of God, doth bring on the doing of it, even as evil thoughts do bring on evil actions; for the thought is as the seed, and conception of all our actions: Now look as after conception there is a travel to bring forth, and a birth in due season: so when the soul by thought hath conceived, presently 11

sently the affections are tickled, and excited, the will inclined, and stirred, which commandeth the inferiour powers to execute what the thought suggested.

12 Twelfthly, Meditation fitteth for conference; hee that hath digested good matter by serious cogitation, study, and care, is able to bring it forth, and utter it (as occasion requireth) As they that have treasured up much gold and silver, can easily lay it out, when it may bee to their advantage; whereas others that after long study can speak excellently, being put to it upon the sudden, can say little for lack of Meditation; herein like unto them, that having laid up nothing in store, are compelled to borrow of the Usurers, before they can make their purchase. Thir-

Thirteenthly and lastly, The Word of God appears excellent, his works great, his favour unspeakable, when wee ponder them in our hearts. By it in our solitarinesse wee enjoy God, and our selves, and by conversing with him wee are fitted for, and made more profitable in all good company. Psa. 8. 3.

Quest. *What use is to bee made of this point?*

Answ. If formerly thou hast been a stranger to this exercise, now learn it, begin to practise it, entertain not conceits, as though it were needlesse, unprofitable, impossible, burdensome, for a Christian life cannot stand without it; Thou shalt finde it exceeding beneficial, delightsome, easie, when thou art entred into it; it is tedious onely to corruption, to the heart renewed,

ed, it is most sweet and comfortable: The neglect of this duty is the very cause why many Christians injoy not the tenth part of those priviledges that God hath provided for them in this their pilgrimage: why they are kept under their strong corruptions, and break forth offensively in their dealings in the world: Moreover, how should a man bee assured of Gods love, if knowing this to bee a duty required, hee never addresse himself unto it in good earnest. It is not sufficient to praise that which is good, speak well of the children of God, keep our selves pure from the gross stains of the time, but we must hate iniquity, and love righteousnes, which they do not, who harbour such thoughts as are displeasing to his Majesty: How can a purified mind

mind take pleasure in those filthy waters that flow from the stinking puddle of original corruption? It is for swine to wallow in the mire, and corrupt fountains to send forth muddy streams. If the treasure bee in Heaven, the heart must be there; If the soul bee of an heavenly disposition, nothing is more delightful than to walk, and commune with God. By thy thoughts thou mayest know thy self; as evil thoughts will argue an evil heart, so good thoughts will argue a good heart: for these cannot bee subject to hypocrisie, as words, and deeds are; which sometimes come more from respect of the creature, than of the Creator. It is the will of God that wee should not onely seek the Kingdome of Heaven, but, minde it, set our

thoughts upon it, and turn the bent of our desires wholly that way. [a] The Lord hath given to us the great things of his Law, [b] caused the Scriptures to bee written for our learning, and sent his Prophets to declare unto us his mind, and pleasure; Christ Jesus (the great Dr. of the Church) hath revealed the glory of God, as it were in open face, and fully, and clearly made known the last will of his heavenly Father touching mans salvation, than which, nothing can bee more wonderful, excellent, delightful, comfortable: Now for us to pass by these things as strange, and now and then only to cast an eye towards them, is it not an offence intollerable? How should the heart be framed after the image of God, but by a serious Meditation of hea-

[a] Mat. 6. 19
[a] Col. 3. 1
[b] Hos. 8. 12

heavenly things, whereby their likeneſs is ſtamped upon the ſoul; as by Application, the ſeal leaves the impreſſion upon the wax: Wee are ſtrangers in this world, who have no abiding City on earth, nor may place our hearts, delights, and felicity here, but Heaven is our home, and our chiefeſt comfort muſt bee to have daily communion with God, and to have our converſation in Heaven with him, which cannot bee enjoyed ordinarily without Meditation. If it bee tedious at firſt, uſe will make it eaſie, and the ſweetneſs which at length wee ſhall taſte in contemplation, will make it delightful. Phil. 3.20

Queſt. *What ſay you of ſuperficial, and careleſs thinking upon ſome points of Doctrine by fits, ſeldome in a good mood?*

Answ. The chief praise of this duty, is, that wee be much in its use, from time to time, through the whole course of our life, and every day thereof, that by recording holy and divine things, especially those which tend to soundnes in the matter of salvation a little time more or les (as opportunity is offered, and occasions will permit) may be bestowed of us, to dry up fleshly, and bad humours of earthly-mindednes, and worldlynes, &c. and to quicken our dull hearts, lest after sleep in sin, the Devil draw us to deep forgetfulnes and security. Neither can any thing if it be weighed, bee les tollerable in the sight of God Almighty, than whereas hee hath given us his Scriptures, which tell us his mind, and teach us how we may com-

Psal. 119. 97. & 1. 2.

commune with his Majesty, and for our behoof hath given us an earnest charge to ponder them in our heart, to have them in our minde, to make them the matter of our cogitation, talk, delight, and practice; yet that Christians should not bee better acquainted with this heavenly course, nor bee occupied thus, unless it bee seldome (as it were) upon high daies, and that very coldly: as if God had been earnest with us about a trifle, or as if hee had offered us great injury to move us thereunto.

Nor is this work sleightly to bee gone about, wee must set our hearts to the cogitation of heavenly things, thorowly debating, and reasoning them with our selves, so far as wee are able, that wee might bee inabled to order our lives, as well in one

state, as another, and strengthened against the assaults of Satan, and allurements of this present evil world: Meditation is a weighty matter, and great pity that works of greatest importance should finde the most sleight regard. It is the work of the Lord, wherein remiss dealing is condemned as injurious to God, hurtful to our selves. [a] The fruit of Meditation stands in fervency; hee that is not serious shall reap no profit: How should the Word sink into our stony hearts, if it bee not minded? how should mercy, or judgement affect, if wee dwell not upon the thought of them? The heart must bee pressed, before it will relent, and fixed upon things above, before it will rejoyce in them. Meditation is one part of a Christian mans trea-

[a] Jer. 48. 10

treasure, that is ever in his hand, can never bee taken from him: Many duties must wait their seasons, but all estates, conditions, companies, actions, minister occasion of Meditation: nor can this liberty bee taken from us by the rage of Satan, or cruelty of persecuting Tyrants; for so long as wee bee with our selves, wee may commune with our selves, and with the Lord. Now, the more excellent our treasure is, the more careful must wee bee to preserve and employ it.

Quest. *Seeing this duty is so necessary, profitable, divine, and comfortable, what doth keep so many from the practice of it?*

Answ. The main impediment and hinderance of this (as of all other duties) is the nourishing of some one sin, or more, unrepented

ed of, which dimmeth the eye of the mind, that it cannot behold spiritual things any more than the Owl can behold the light, and cloyeth the appetite that it cannot relish heavenly dainties, any more than a full stomach doth hunger after sweet meats: As a black cloth can take no other dye; so an impenitent heart is uncapable of Divine Meditation.

Quest. *How is this impediment to bee removed?*

Answ. This bar can never bee removed, till our hearts bee purged, by humble, and unfeigned repentance, hearty sorrow, free confession, and well advised purpose of reformation. Wherefore as they that intend to keep any precious liquor, will see that their vessels bee clean: So they that will entertain holy

thoughts

thoughts and desires, must give all diligence to keep their hearts pure, and undefiled.

Quest. *What are the special lets that hinder the performance of this duty?*

Answ. They bee diverse; whereof some do keep men that they do not use this exercise at all; others drive them to use it without any fruit, or sound profit, performing it sleightly, and negligently, making it an idle Ceremony, or a matter of course or custome.

Quest. *What bee these lets?*

Answ. One is a deadly custome of ranging after fond, and deceiveable thoughts, delights, and dreams of things either impertinent, or unprofitable, and oftentimes impossible, being such as never were, nor are, nor ever shall bee: or else flatly wicked,

wicked, hurtful, and pernicious. For the heart of man is exceeding deceitful, slippery, fickle, wandring, and wicked, infinite waies: Besides that, the subtil and malicious fowler, even Satan that old Serpent, doth set his snares so thick in our waies, that it is very hard for us to pass thorow them without being intangled. To this head may bee referred worldly cares and pleasures, which clog the soul that it cannot mount aloft. For as a bird (whose wings are limed) is not able to take her flight on high: So the man, whose mind is intangled with worldly cares, and earthly delights, is not able by holy Meditation to soar aloft up to Heaven: When the mind is carried after other desires, it is unfit for heavenly Meditation, slow, and unwilling to bee

bee occupied in cogitation, and consideration of any holy matters; hee that knows it should bee performed, is sometimes grieved for the omitting of it, but if the mind bee impotent, as having lost her former strength, and constancy in good things, for the time it is constrained to omit and let pass the same.

Quest. *How is this to bee remedied?*

Answ. The remedy to such a one (as through an unsettled heart, cannot meditate of any parts of Christianity, and godliness, having otherwise knowledge) is to meditate of his present unfitness, looseness of heart, and earthly-mindedness, to account it as an heavy burden, to accuse his heart, and to bring it to kindly relenting, by considering how far it is off presently from

from that mildnes, humbleness, and heavenlines, and readines unto duty, which ought to bee in him continually, and hath been in him at some other time: Let him bring his mind to these considerations, and say with himself; I have received a mind to * please God, to be teachable, and ready to any duty; I have opposed my self against mine own will, and the Devils secret, and malicious counsel (though sweet to the flesh) [a] I am not a debtor unto it, how can I then yeeld to the untowardness of my heart, and to sin against my God I have tasted the fatness and marrow in the house of God, and shall I return to feed upon the husks of the world? where are the manifold and comfortable priviledges which he hath given mee, that I might bee faithful unto

* Heb. 13. 18. Col. 1. 10.

[a] Rom. 8. 12.

unto him? Am I weary of my own peace, and do I haſte after my own ſorrow? what pleaſure can I finde in vanity and vexation? what taſte in the white of an egg? Lord bring back this ranging heart of mine from the deceitful dreams and fears that it hath been ſnared in, and reſtore it to the liberty that it was wont to injoy, that is, to ſolace it ſelf in thy favour and communion with thee. And this gift being decayed, through my own fault, and Satans cruelty and ſubtilty forgive my cold and weak love of thee, who have provoked thy Majeſty (if thou wouldeſt bee provoked) to frown, and look amiably on mee no more: Thou Lord chargeſt mee thus to ſeek thy face, and ſweet preſence, which I have gone from, and for a time been blinded, as having

having no ability to muse of any good thing, and have not seen that I was seduced, till I perceived that I had lost this sweet liberty. Now therefore, O Lord, shew thy loving kindness in my distress and weakness, and restore to mee this liberty of my heart, which many of thy children do finde and enjoy. Thus fall into consideration with thy self, and bee not discouraged when thou seest thy infirmities, who hast learned to use all thy wants to humble thee, and to bring thee nearer to God, rather than to go further from him: but let no man give any liberty in any sort to his evil heart (when it is turned away from chearfulness and willingness in any part of Gods service) to go forward therein, for that were to bring himself into utter bondage. Quest.

Queſt. *What is a ſecond Impediment or Let?*

Anſw. Inconſtancy; when wee begin to ſet upon this duty, but are drawn aſide by the love of vanity, or diſcouraged by the difficulty of the exerciſe, and ſo give over, and never ſet about it in good earneſt.

Queſt. *What is the Remedy of this Impediment?*

Anſw. Labour to be conſtant, and if it bee poſſible, let no day paſs without ſome line of Meditation, though many blocks be caſt into the way. Impediments will multiply, as wee give way unto them; indiſpoſition and unfitneſs get ſtrength through omiſſion, and delay; but conſtancy and courage (our breaking thorow all oppoſition) with careful watchfulneſs to tye up our thoughts, will make this

exercise in time, not onely possible, but easie, and pleasant. It is grievous for children at the first to go to school, but after they have tasted the sweetness of study, and tried the fruit, they are contented to leave country and kindred for love of learning: So the entrance into this exercise is hard and tedious, but the progress full of heavenly delight and contentation; nay, it is grievous to bee pestered with vain, wicked, idle thoughts, whereby communion and fellowship with Christ is interrupted. In the world it is accounted a hard thing to bee bound with cords and chains of Iron, to bee vexed with Tyranny an insupportable burthen, what is it then to bee bound with chains of our corruption, to live under the power of lust,

to

to bee toſſed to and fro with the temptations of Satan? let us therefore ſet apart the fitteſt time for this exerciſe, eſpecially on the Sabbath (when ſpiritual idleneſs is as bad, or worſe than bodily labour) and to keep it conſtantly, not giving over (when wee have once begun) till wee finde that it hath done our hearts ſome good: For what will it avail us to knock at the door of our hearts, if wee depart before wee have an anſwer?

Queſt. *May not a man ſpend too much time in private Meditation?*

Anſw. Yes, no doubt, and many do, who are ſo addicted to their own private devotions, that they neglect other duties of Chriſtianity, and of their particular callings, the neglect of which, beſides that it is a ſepa-

rating of those things which God hath joyned together, doth not inlighten and quicken the mind, but rather (by the just judgement of God) blinde and dull it. Hence it proceeded, that the antient Monks mingling bodily labour with Meditation, proved excellent, whereas the Popish Monks, mured up in their Cloysters, and exempted from bodily labour, proved the most noisome Caterpillers in the world. Wherefore wee must so chuse our times for the performance of this exercise, that God bee not dishonoured, nor our brethren wronged, by the neglect of others. The object of this exercise being spiritual, is far too excellent for the weak sight of man to bee gazing on continually.

Quest. *What is the third Impediment?* *Answ.*

Answ. Many are hindered and kept back from this duty, for want of matter. Notwithstanding the great variety of matter, which the word, and works of God, and the due consideration of their own estate might minister unto them, yet their hearts are so barren, and their heads so empty, that they are utterly to seek about what to bestow their time, and their cogitations.

Quest. *What is the Remedy against this Let?*

Answ. The help is to bewail and lament the barrenness of their hearts, and to enforce themselves to read, and hear the Word, and to mark, and observe the works of God with greater care, conscience, diligence, and attention, than they have done in former times. How a Christian is to furnish

himself with good matter, wee shall shew hereafter more fully. But for the present, every man that is desirous to set upon this exercise, may propound these things to bee thought upon.

1 First, His vileness, unworthiness, and other his several corruptions and sins.

2 Secondly, The sufferings of Christ, and the wrath of God due unto us for sin.

3 Thirdly, The love of God in giving Christ to dye for us, and the greatness of his bounty, and riches of his grace, and constancy of his love, in forgiving so many transgressions, and subduing daily more and more the dominion of sin and Satan.

4 Fourthly, Hee is to think how hee may bee guided, thorow that present day, after the rules of his daily direction, especially those

thoſe that ſeem hardeſt to bee followed, both the well-ordering of his heart, and framing of his life ſo far as ſtands with Gods Word.

Fifthly, Let him meditate on the ſeveral parts of the Chriſtian Armor, and how God hath appointed to ſtrengthen him thereby for his better going forward in a godly life. 5

Laſtly, Let him conſider of the outward bleſſings that God vouchſafeth unto him, his conſtant care, and fatherly protection over him, in his going out, and coming in, providing him meat, drink, and apparel, and other neceſſaries. 6

Queſt. *What is the fourth Let?*

Anſw. Want of leiſure and opportunity, by reaſon of neceſſary buſineſs taking up the time.

Quest. *How is this to bee remedied?*

Answ. Men must know, that the ordinary works of their calling, are not to put this duty out of place, for if they do, it is by the unskilfulness, or untowardness of them, who commit this fault; but the one of them is appointed of God to go with the other, and both of them to stand together to the upholding of one another. If any through necessary occasion and hinderances, shall be constrained to let pass this duty of Meditation, when otherwise hee would have set upon it, hereby let it appear to have been necessarily passed by, and without his fault: if hee supply the want of this duty after his necessary labour ended, and take heed that in no wise it bee omitted altogether, unless

unleſs hee can bee aſſured with peace, that God in the omitting of it hath been remembred anſwerably ſome other way.

Queſt. *What ſhould move us to bee careful to take time for this duty?*

Anſw. Becauſe wee are earneſtly exhorted by the Apoſtle *to redeem the time*, that is, to take the opportunity, and lay hold on all occaſions whereby wee may glorifie God, or do good to others, and to our own ſouls. And the ſpecial ſpur to provoke us to make choice of, and conſtantly to keep ſome time to the performance of this duty, and to break thorow the manifold lets and impediments, which ſtand in our way, is the due conſideration of the fruits, and effects of this duty carefully performed, which have been mentioned before,

before, and come to bee named hereafter.

Quest. *What things do hinder the fruitful performance of this duty?*

Answ. Two principally, which may bee called abuses of Meditation.

1 First, Sleightnes; when wee make a ceremony of it, not so much looking how our hearts are affected in and by it, as that wee may not justly bee charged for omitting it.

2 Secondly, Trifling fantasies, and worldly cares, which fill the head, that wee cannot minde heavenly things; hence followeth wearines of it, and an hastening to more liberty, that our hearts may range where they list.

Quest. *How are these abuses to bee remedied?*

Answ.

A. First, We must remember, 1
that it is a duty of great weight, earnestly called for at our hands, of singular fruit, and comfort, worthy to bee delighted in, and exercised with greatest diligence. The men of the world are exact in trifles, is it not a shame to the children of God, if they be sleighty in matters of so great importance? Labour spent in the duties of Religion is lost, and the fruit perisheth, if wee strive not to perform them with life and power.

Secondly, To obtain, that we 2
may bee fit to perform this duty, and not to bee carried at that time after wandring, wee must tye up our loose hearts throughout the day from the deadly custome of ranging after vain, fond, and deceiveable thoughts, dreams, and delights; wee must weigh

weigh how little worth this is to suffer our cogitations to bee fastened on things transitory with delight, much less about those that are filthy, and evil, but rather bring them to bee taken up in those which are heavenly: This wee are called unto, and until wee learn, how weighty soever our dealings be, to count this the chiefest, to keep peace with God, and ever fear to offend him, it will bee an hard matter to bring our selves to meditate with chearfulness, and fruit.

3 Thirdly, When thou settest upon this duty, take heed of self-confidence, lest thou provoke God to give thee up to be buffeted of Satan, to teach thee humility, and lowlines. How should wee hope to prosper in any good work, so long as wee trust

truſt in our own ſtrength? Succeſs joyned with ſelf-preſumption, is perillous; for it tendeth to ſpiritual fulneſs, and ſurfeiting, two main and great diſeaſes of the ſoul.

Queſt. *What bee the ſorts and kinds of Divine Meditation?*

Anſw. It is fitly divided into two ſorts.

Firſt, Extemporary, occaſional, or ſudden, which may bee done at all times, and in all employments. 1

Secondly, Set, deliberate, or ſolemn: both theſe have their uſe, and in both theſe, ſeriouſneſs is required. 2

Queſt. *What is occaſional Meditation?*

Anſw. It is a ſerious bending of the mind, to think upon ſome good and profitable ſubject, being occaſioned thereunto by ſuch things

things as (by the providence of God) do offer themselves to our senses, eyes, and ears, as wee go about the duties of our calling, or bee exercised in some honest, and lawful Recreation, for the continuance of our health, and comfort of our life.

Psal. 8. 8. Joh. 4. 10. Prov. 6. 6. Mat. 6. 26.

Quest. *What Rules are to bee noted touching this extemporary Meditation?*

1 *Answ.* First, Extemporary Meditation, as Ejaculatory Prayers, have no ornament but fervency, no motive but love, no other eloquence but affection, and their clauses, no contexture but necessity.

2 Secondly, No employment can hinder us from this duty, they rather minister occasion thereof unto us: The cold of Winter, the heat of Summer, the sweetness of the Spring,

Spring, the fruitfulneſs of the Harveſt, do * praiſe the Lord, that is, do miniſter plentiful occaſion to us to praiſe God: No month in the year, nor week in the month, nor day in the week, nor hour in the day, which doth not afford us ſome profitable matter to meditate upon. * Pſa. 19. 1. & 69. 34. & 89. 5. Pſa. 8. 3, 4.

Thirdly, The fitteſt day in the week, is the Lords day, which wee are to conſecrate wholly to him: but as no perſon is exempted from this duty, ſo no time but may fitly ſerve for the performance thereof. 3

Fourthly, As wee muſt not lightly let ſlip ſuch matters of good uſe, as will bee often offered unto us, and defraud our ſelves, and others of the benefit thereof; ſo wee muſt not fix our minds too earneſtly upon them, leſt wee offend others, and neg- 4

lect

left some necessary duty of our own.

5 Fifthly, The more natural and lively the occasion of external Meditation is, the better it doth affect at the first salutation, as soon as wee take a taste of it, which must bee regarded and laboured after, because the businesse of this life will not suffer us largely to discourse upon them.

6 Sixthly, Variety of matter is very profitable, for often iteration of the same thing, breeds heartlesnes. It is with Meditation, as with medicines, which with over ordinary use lose their soveraignty, and kill in stead of purging.

Quest. *What are the benefits of Extemporary Meditation?*

Answ. 1 It fits for setled Meditation, as it furnisheth with mat-

matter, and prepareth the heart to commune with God: as oft ſalutations makes way to familiar conference. Hee that obſerveth the Lord in all his dealings, and makes ſpiritual uſe of earthly things, ſhall with more eaſe finde and faſten his heart upon ſome good matter, and have it at command, to attend upon the Lord in moſt ſerious Communication.

Secondly, It kindles the graces of the Spirit, which might otherwiſe bee damped with the foggy miſts of earthly cares, and vain delights. As the fire gathers that which cauſeth it to burn faſter: ſo the Spirit raiſeth holy thoughts upon outward occaſions, which do revive the grace wee have received. 2

Thirdly, Since the greateſt part of our life is ſpent in world- 3

ly affairs, unless wee lift up our hearts to God upon occasions offered in our callings, journies, and such like, wee shall deprive our souls for the most part of sweet fellowship, and communion, and company with the Lord.

4 Fourthly, If God walk along with us in the labours of our callings, is it not an offence in us to take no notice, or observation of his presence?

5 Fifthly, Occasional Meditation is a sharp spur, and strong provocation, to prayer and praise: Hee cannot want matter of thanksgiving or supplication, that conscionably observeth and considereth the goodness of the Lord towards him in the things of this life, and infirmities of the creature, and his own inability of himself to effect, or bring any thing to pass. Sixthly,

Sixthly, It furthers much to bring us to the knowledge of our selves, and to encrease humility: self-ignorance is a disease most dangerous, the daughter of corruption, infidelity, forgetfulness, pride, presumption, earthly-mindedness, flattery, bad company, ill examples, and custome in sin. One special Remedy of this over-spreading malady is oft and diligent Meditation of the things that shall happen, fall out, or be presented to us in our daily vocations. 6

Seventhly, The thoughts of this nature are not onely lawful, but so behooveful, that wee cannot omit them without neglect of God, his creatures, our selves; the creatures are half lost, if wee onely imploy them, not learn something of them, God is wronged, if his creatures bee un- 7

regarded; our selves most of all, if wee read this great volume of the creatures, and take out no lesson for our instruction.

Quest. *How should a man fit himself for extemporary Meditation?*

1 *Answ.* Firſt, Hee must get an heart desirous to reap profit by every thing that doth befall him. Love of wealth draws the covetous to study how he might turn all things to his advantage, and love of grace will produce the same effects in her kind.

2 Secondly, Hee must learn to read the power, goodness, bounty, and wisdome of the Lord written in fair characters in the large volume of the creatures, and in every leaf, and line thereof. The fire, hail, snow, rain, dew, frost, yea, herbs, plants, fish, and fowl, praise the Lord, that

is,

is, give occasion to man to magnifie the name of God, who is great and excellent. Psal. 8. 1, 2, 3.

Thirdly, Let him make spiritual use of earthly things, and mark how the one is resembled and shadowed forth in the other: And to this end it is good to observe the parables, and similitudes, and borrowed phrases in Scripture, whereby a Christian may soon furnish himself in this point. 3

Fourthly, It must bee remembred, that in every thing the wise, just, powerful, and good providence of God doth over-rule: this perswasion rooted in the heart, draws a man to acknowledge the hand of God in whatsoever happeneth, great or small. 4

Quest. *What is solemn, or settled Meditation?*

Answ. It is a purposed and advised bending of the mind, to consider, and muse on some good and wholesome matter; with resolution to work the heart into an holy temper, to which end wee separate our selves from all companies and occasions that might distract us.

Quest. *What Motives should perswade Christians to set upon this duty?*

Answ. Besides the benefits before mentioned, which principally belong to solemn Meditation, these considerations may bee of force to quicken us.

1 First, Wee must exercise our selves in the Word of God with care, and diligence, that it may sink into us, abide with us, quicken, and conform, and strengthen us. Wee are commanded *to treasure up, and feed upon*

upon the Word of Life; Binde up the Testimony, seal up the Law, among my Disciples. Blessed are they that hear the Word of God and keep it. Blessed are they who read, and they who hear the words of this Prophecy, and keep those things that are written therein. *Receive with meekness the ingrafted Word*, which is so called, because it should abide in our hearts like a Siens in a stock, and never bee removed, but there grow and fructifie unto eternal life. But the Word cannot take root, bee remembred, digested, wee cannot feed upon it without Meditation: Let him that readeth, consider and understand.

Psal. 119. 11. Isa. 8. 16. Luke 11. 28. Rev. 1. 3. James 1. 21. Mat. 24. 15

2 Secondly, The Scriptures were written to bring us to happiness, to fellowship, and communion with God, to everlasting

life. They set forth the way to blessedness, and direct how wee
Rev. 1. 3. may bee partakers of glory. And
Joh. 20. 31 if wee be not careless of the sal-
1 Joh. 1. 3 vation of our souls, wee must search into this Mine as well by Meditation, as reading, or hearing.

Quest. *What things must bee looked unto, that this exercise might bee taken in hand with good success?*

Answ. Choice of good matter, fit place, due time, holy entrance, orderly proceeding, and seasonable, meet conclusion.

Quest. *What rules are to bee observed touching the choice of matter?*

Answ. The matter of Meditation must be some good and profitable thing: as God himself, his attributes, titles, properties, works of mercy, and judge-

judgement, creation and providence, his Word, Threatnings, Promises, Commandements; our own unworthiness, mortality, the afflictions and manifold changes of this life, and how we may go thorow them with comfort.

But out of this variety, make choice of some one to bee the subject of thy discourse, for hee that is every where, is no where: Nothing is more hurtful to the body, than many medicines. The sore, to which sundry kinds of plaisters are applied, is hardly brought to a scar. Think upon one thing until thy affections be wrought upon. Nothing is so profitable, that it can benefit much in passing by; hee that comes by the fire may feel a glympse of heat, hee onely is warmed that tarrieth at it: It is the

Nihil tam utile est quod in transitu profit. Senec.

the property of a weak stomach to taste many things, to hold and digest nothing. Many matters thrust upon us at once, weaken and distract the powers of the soul. To scatter the thoughts upon many things, is to attend nothing as it ought: when the mind is distracted betwixt divers things, the one is a hinderance to the other, and we receive benefit by neither, nor bring our thoughts to any good issue.

2 Secondly, Out of this variety of matter, seeing thou must take but some one, play the part of a wise man, and chuse that whereof thou hast special need: As salves are not for every sore, nor all meats agreeable to every constitution; every part of the Word is holy, pure, and good; but times, occasions, conditions

of

of men make a difference: There is a time to mourn, and a time to bee merry; to put on sackcloth, and to sing for joy; and there is matter to bee found in Scripture which doth suit with each disposition, and will serve to stir up either affection. The occasions, diseases, comforts of Christians are not the same, nor alike at all times: out of the treasury of the Word wee may gather instructions which will fit every occasion, season, and estate: Fitness of matter is required, as in speaking, so in musing. * Art thou afflicted in conscience for sin? speak with thy heart of the promises of pardon and forgiveness, that are freely made in Jesus Christ: enquire diligently into Gods mercies of old, commune with thy self what former experiences of love

* Isa. 35. 3,4. & 40. 28 Job 8. 8. Deut. 4. 32. & 32.7 Lam. 3.56 Psal. 77. 11, 12

and

and favour thou hast felt; call to remembrance how tenderly the Lord hath dealt with others upon their humble submission. If thou wouldest stir up thy heart to love or reverence the Lord, think of his majesty, power, goodness, free-grace, and undeserved mercy.

3 Thirdly, It is neither unlawful nor unmeet to meditate on our sins past, that we might be humbled; & frailties present, that we might prevent them: but a discreet course must bee held that wee defile not our selves with delightful remembrance of sin; nor by thoughts stir up the corruption which wee desire to subdue, nor cast our selves into despair and horrour for what hath been done amiss, nor give place to doubting of perseverance in respect of the time to come,

Ezek. 16. 63. & 36, 31.

come, for humiliation must bee joyned with confidence in God, and watchfulnes that wee fall not into sin again.

Quest. *What if the heart bee so barren, that wee cannot call to minde any thing that hath been taught, nor remember any mercy wee have received?*

Answ. These may bee observed as matters meet to have good room in our thoughts, our own vilenes, unworthines, emptines of grace, the goodnes of God in sparing our lives, bestowing outward blessings, forgiving multitude of sins, and subduing them more and more; the sufferings of Christ in the Garden, and upon the Cros; the Christian armour that must bee put on, and kept about us; how wee might carry our selves uprightly in all estates, and affairs,

fairs, that our hearts bee not disordered, nor our lives blemished. It is not amiss to propound to our selves the mercies of the day, our special wants of grace, and the chastisements that are laid upon us as matters to bee mused on: that wee might bee quickened to prayer and thanksgiving.

1 First, More particularly, Hee that desireth to have help by Meditation, must weigh how slippery, bad, fickle, and wandring his heart is, infinite waies to his exceeding hurt, and that hee must of necessity appoint some [a] set time to check, reclaim, and wean it from the same.

Jer. 17. 9. [a] Psa. 55. 17

2 Secondly, Hee must watch over his heart (having been so often deceived by it) throughout his whole life, and have it in

suspition,

ſuſpition, that ſo it may be more fit to bee drawn to ſuch heavenly exerciſe, and be ſtayed therein, and attend upon the ſame. Prov. 4.23

Thirdly, This being obſerved, let him draw matter of Meditation and Prayer from his own wants, and infirmities, from Gods benefits, from the change and mortality of this life. Alſo it is good to meditate on the Glory of Gods Kingdome, the ſweet comfort of a peaceable conſcience; love of humility, meekneſs, but ſpecially that which for the preſent ſhall bee moſt ſuitable to his ſtate. 3

Fourthly, If hee cannot thus do, let him read ſome portion of the holy Scripture, ſome part of the Pſalms, ſome of the Epiſtles of the Apoſtles, Chriſts Sermons, or ſome good book fit to furniſh him with good matter 4

ter, and season, and affect his mind, that so hee may learn how to perform this duty, and quicken up himself to it oft, and from time to time, when hee once knoweth how. If hee cannot read, hee must desire more help of others, and for want of help, hee must needs look to go the more slowly, forward, either in the right and kinde use of Meditation, or in any part of sound godliness, and Christianity, seeing wee cannot bee ignorant of this, that the old subtil fowler sets his snares, and nets, so thick in our way, that wee have no shift but to fall into them, and light upon them, except with the wings of Meditation and Prayer, wee mount up on high above them, and fly over them, which to them that cannot read will for the most part bee found more

more hard and difficult.

Queſt. *What particular Meditations concerning duties to be performed or practiſed, may wee finde commended unto us in the writings of godly men?*

Anſw. They are many, and moſt excellent, amongſt the reſt, ſuch as theſe.

Firſt, No man ſhall bee fit to govern himſelf aright before men, if hee do not uſually acquaint himſelf with, and frame himſelf after that Chriſtian courſe firſt which hee ſhould have before God. Yet no man muſt reſt in private exerciſes of Religion, without a well-ordered life before men. 1

Secondly, Every part of our calling muſt bee ſo carried on, as wee may have peace thereby: and it behooveth us to bee beſt armed, and moſt circumſpect, 2

where wee are weakest.

If a man bee fallen, hee must not lye still, but return unto the Lord with speed, though with much difficulty: for sluggishnes and deadnes will follow, if the breach bee not made up in our consciences, but if wee seek to God unfeignedly, hee is not far off.

1 Sam. 7. 7,8,9,10, 11,12.

3 Thirdly, If wee rejoyce onely in prosperity, it is a sign that Gods benefits, not his favour makes us merry.

It is a good thing to rejoyce in the Sabbaths, and in the communion of Saints, yet wee may not rest there, but in this, that God is our portion alwaies.

Psal. 119. 57. 2 Cor. 5. 16.

4 Fourthly, In crosses we must use great sobriety, otherwise wee shall be unsettled by them, especially if they bee many and great, to this end wee must prepare

pare for trouble before it come, and in it wee muſt meditate on the beſt priviledge that God hath given unto us, labouring that our graces and ſtrength increaſe, as our afflictions do increaſe: For affliction is doubled, if the inward infirmity of the mind bee not diminiſhed. Although for want of proof wee count all afflictions hard, yet when wee have experience of the fruit and benefit that comes by them, confidence in God will make them eaſie, if our cauſe bee good: Wee ſhall never want ſomewhat to exerciſe us ſin, or trouble, we ſhall have; neither is it unprofitable for us, to the end wee may bee ever in the combate, for our life is a warfare. 1 Sam. 30. 6. Pſal. 77.3

Fifthly, Wee ſeldome keep unlawful commodities, or re- 5

joyce too much in lawful; but the Lord doth crosse us in them. The things of this world are too sweet and pleasant to our corrupt taste, but the Lord doth season them with bitternes; vain liberties breed much sorrow, and unchearfulnes.

6 Sixthly, The most vexations in our life become annoyances unto us through our own fault, in that wee either prevent them not when wee may, or bear them not as wee ought, or make not use of them as wee might do.

7 Seventhly, When matters of more importance than our salvation come into place, let us bee occupied with more fervency in them, than in that, but not before. The practice of godlines is a rich and gainful trade, but if it bee not well followed, it will bring no great profit.

Prov. 3. 14.

Eighthly,

Eighthly, To have a willing mind to bee well occupied, and matter about which wee may, and time to beſtow therein, and freedome from lets therefrom, is an eſtate to bee much made of, and yet for the moſt part, they which have moſt outward incouragements, cannot tell what to do with them. 8

Ninthly, Whatſoever meaſure of graces wee have gotten, yet it is certain, that God hath much more than wee can think of, if thoſe bee the matters which we have in greateſt price: but being ſet light by, and the means neglected (which preſerve them) they dye. That is a good ſtate when wee have not onely joy in heavenly things at the firſt hearing of them, but increaſing in joy as our knowledge and experience increaſeth: and 9

when wee are not onely delighted in the present duties of Gods service, but also as joyful to think of them that are to come; accounting that the more they bee, the better they are. The flesh is apt to take the smallest occasions that may bee, to favour it self, but our study must bee to increase in goodness, and to delight more in walking with God in a Christian course.

10 Tenthly, Love of the world makes death terrible, and surfetting in pleasure lulleth us asleep. Seeing it pleaseth the Lord to let us know that wee have this precious liberty all the day long to bee with him, to enjoy his presence by Faith, and solace our selves in bold affiance in him, and that for all good things, and to bee free from the fear, terrour, and anguish, which haunteth

haunteth the ungodly. It were pity wee ſhould for ſome deceivable folly deprive our ſelves of ſuch happineſs and peace, as hee alloweth us even here to be partakers of.

Eleventhly, The more ſure thou art of Gods favour by Faith, the more humble thou art alſo: One ſpecial point of profiting, is to know our own vileneſs and miſery better daily, that ſo wee may come to know the ineſtimable bounty of God the better, and what wee are beholding to him for, as receiving increaſe from him, multiplied pardons of ſin, and daily increaſe of grace. 11 Mat. 15. 27

Twelfthly, They are worthy of great puniſhment, who ſet light by the plenty of grace, the crumms whereof Gods hungry ſervants do ſet great ſtore 12

by. Look what care, conscience, zeal, love, and reverent estimation of good things thou hadst when first thou embracedst the Gospel, the same at least retain, and bee sure thou keepest still afterwards. The more knowledge that thou hast, take heed thou beest not more secure: for thus it is with many at this day, who therefore do smart for it: wee shall not injoy the grace we had at first, except wee bee as careful now to keep it, as wee were then to come by it.

13 Thirteenthly, When wee are afflicted, and the wicked spared, our estate seems to them most vile, when wee are both in prosperity, they seem more happy: when they and wee bee both afflicted, then they account our estate happier than their own, but especially when they

they bee afflicted, and wee ſpared: Wee may not aſſign the Lord in what place and ſtate, in what condition and company we ſhould live, but as ſtrangers wait on him, even as the handmaid on her Miſtreſs, for whatſoever hee will allow us: wee are ready moſt commonly to bee called away by death, before wee have learned how to live. Exod. 14. 25.

Fourteenthly, Keep down carnal liberty, and the ſpiritual liberty ſhall bee great, reſt on God, and it ſhall make thee overcome the hardeſt things. If thou wilt finde Chriſt ſweet, thou muſt ever finde ſin bitter. Fear ever to offend God, and thou [a] needeſt not to fear any other peril. No good thing abideth long with us in its ſtrength, and beauty, without new quickning: When wee feel any wearineſs 14

[a] Pſal. 32. 7. & 91. 11

rinesse in a godly course, by what occasions, or weighty dealings soever it bee, the Devil hath met with us; therefore wee must speedily take shame and sorrow, and turn unto the Lord.

15 Fifteenthly, Wee must remember to serve and walk with God, by daies, not by weeks, and months onely. A great difference there is betwixt the observing and viewing of our life from day to day, and the doing of it by fits now and then; in the one wee are safe, chearful, and fruitful, in the other rash, offensive, and often unquiet for it, walking in fear, and with little comfort.

Psa. 90.12

16 Sixteenthly, As husbandmen wait for their fruit, so should wee for that which wee pray, and hope for; and that would make us joyful when wee obtain it.

it. If a man can rejoyce at the conversion of a sinner, then is hee the friend of Christ. Luke 15. 6.

Seventeenthly, It is a folly, yea, a madness to bee heavy to the death for any earthly thing, when yet a man desireth nothing more than life. They who can neglect, and set meanly by a little vain glory, and credit with men, may gain, and injoy much peace with God. All our life ought to bee a providing for a good end, and a keeping away of woe, which cometh by sin, fear not the pain of death, for God can make it easie, or tollerable. 17

Eighteenthly, The flesh would fain please it self in some unlawful liberty, when we have pleased God in some duties: but a wise man will keep him well while hee is well. 18

Nine-

19 Nineteenthly, Where there is wilfulness in sinning, there is great difficulty in relenting, and also no power, nor boldness in beleeving; many beginning well in godliness, have fainted and quailed, or been justly reproached before their end, that others may the more fear their own weakness: where new knowledge is not sought, there is the less savour in the old, and when men make not good use of the old, the seeking of the new is but an enquiring after novelties.

20 Twentiethly, Men having experience of Satans malice, and continual dogging of them to do evil, it should move them to trusse on their armour, to trust better in the Lord, and less to themselves. Corruption grows when it is not suspected, and where it is suspected to grow,

if

if we go not about to pull it out, and pluck it up, it will bee too deeply faſtened in a ſhort time. The like may bee ſaid of conceitedneſs, though a man pray, and meditate, and keep a better courſe in his life than ſome do, yet if hee do it but ſleightly, that the fleſh prevaileth much in hindering the well performing of it, all will ſoon come to nought: It may bee perceived in the ſway it beareth in other parts of the life, and then let it bee ſpeedily amended.

Oneantwentiethly, It is good ſo to task our ſelves with duties, one or other, at all times, and in all places, that wee may cut off occaſions of much ſin. Men have never ſo much wealth, but more is ever welcome. Why ſhould wee not do the like in ſpiritual things? even 21

who-

whosoever hath most and greatest part therein: when wee bee come to the highest degree of seeking God with much travail, yet wee abide hardly, and a short time therein, at least much unprofitablenes and barrennes will meet with us again afterwards, by means of our corrupt hearts, which being so, wee need not think that wee bee too forward, when wee bee at the best.

22 Twoantwentiethly, Let no sin bee sleightly passed over, or boldly committed, for when it commeth to remembrance in trouble, it will bee an heavy burden, and pinch us to the very heart.

Quest. *What other Observations fit to bee meditated upon, shall wee finde in the writings of godly men?*

Answ.

Answ. These and such like.

First, That wee keep a narrow watch over our hearts, words, and deeds continually. 1 — 1 Pet. 1. 15 Psa. 39. 1. Eph. 5. 15

Secondly, That with all care the time bee redeemed, which hath been carelesly, and idlely, and unprofitably spent. 2 — Eph. 5. 16 Col. 4. 2.

Thirdly, That once in the day private prayer at the least, and meditation (if it may) bee used. 3 — Luke 14. 15, 16.

Fourthly, That care bee had to do, and receive good in company. 4

Fifthly, That our family bee with diligence and regard instructed, watched over, and governed. 5

Sixthly, That no more time or care bee bestowed in matters of the world, than must needs. 6 — Deut. 4. 9. & 6. 7.

Seventhly, That wee stir up our selves to * liberality to Gods Saints. 7 — Gen. 18. 19 *Gal. 6. 10

Eightly,

8 Eighthly, That wee give not
[a] Col. 3. 5. the least liberty to wandring [a] lusts and affections.

9 Ninthly, [b] That wee prepare
[b] Mat. 16. 24 our selves to bear the crosse, by what means soever it shall please God to exercise us.

10 Tenthly, That wee bestow some time, not onely in mourning for our own sins, but also
Dan. 9. 3, 4 for the sins of others, of the time and age wherein wee live.

11 Eleventhly, That wee look daily for the coming of our Lord
1 Cor. 1. 7. Tit. 2. 13. Jesus Christ, for our full deliverance out of this life.

12 Twelfthly, That wee use (as wee shall have opportunity, at least as wee shall have necessity) to acquaint our selves with some godly, and faithful persons, with whom wee may confer of our
James 5. 16. Christian estate, and open our doubts, to the quickening up of Gods

Gods Graces in us.

Thirteenthly, That wee ob- 13
serve the departure of men out of this life, their mortality, the vanity and alteration of things below, the more to contemn the world, and to continue our longing after the life to come: And that wee meditate, and muse often on our own death, and going out of this life, how wee must lye in the grave, which will serve to beat down the pride of life in us. Eccl. 7. 4 Rev. 22. 20

Fourteenthly, That wee read 14
somewhat daily of the holy Scriptures for the further encrease of our knowledge, and understanding, if it may bee. Deut. 17. 19, 20. Josh. 1. 8. Psa. 1. 2. Dan. 9. 2.

Fifteenthly, That wee enter 15
into Covenant with God, that wee will strive against all sin, especially against the special sins and corruptions of our hearts;

and lives, wherein wee have most dishonoured the Lord, and raised up most guiltiness to our own consciences; that wee carefully see our Covenant with God kept and continued.

Neh. 9. 38. 2 Chron. 34. 31.

16 Sixteenthly, That wee mark how sin dieth, and is weakned in us, and that wee turn not to our old sins again, but wisely avoid all occasions of sin.

1 Pet. 1. 14 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21, 22. 1 Thes. 5. 22

17 Seventeenthly, That wee fall not from our first love, but continue still our affections to the liking of Gods Word, and all the holy exercises of Religion, diligently hearing it, and faithfully practising it in our lives and conversations; that wee prepare our selves before wee come, meditate and confer of that wee hear, either by our selves, or with others, and so mark our daily profiting in Religion.

Rev. 2. 4. James 1. 19 Rom. 2. 13

Eighteenthly,

Eighteenthly, That wee bee often occupied in meditating on Gods Works, and benefits, and sound forth his praises for the same. 18 Eph. 5. 20. Psal. 116. 12, 13. & 118. 15.

Nineteenthly, That wee exercise our faith by taking great comfort and delight in the great benefit of our Redemption by Christ, and the fruition of Gods presence in his glorious and blessed Kingdome. 19 Phil. 1. 23. 2 Tim. 4. 7, 8.

Lastly, That wee make not these holy Meditations, and such like practices of repentance, common or customary in time, neither use them for course. 20

Quest. *What place is fit for Meditation?*

Answ. It is indifferent whether it bee in the house, or in the field, at home, or abroad, walking, sitting, or lying, but a solitary place is fittest for this exer- Gen. 24. 63. Deut. 6. 6, 7. Act. 10.

Mat. 6. 6 Luk. 11. 1 cise: (as our Saviour hath taught us, *when thou prayest, enter into thy closet,* and pray privately) that being alone, not distracted with noise, or company, wee might with more freedome, and quietnes, talk with God. Wee cannot bee too wary in avoiding all occasions of disturbance, because every small thing will soon break us off in this service. But some men can bee more solitary at the Market-cross, or in the midst of a throng, than some others in their closets (when they bee furthest removed from company.)

Moreover, it is not amiss to use one place often, for wee Joh. 18. 2 finde fewest Impediments there where wee are most accustomed to meet the Lord; then wee can best recollect our thoughts, and being gathered, keep them together

gether without distraction.

Quest. *What say you of them that have no room to bee alone?*

Answ. First, They must bee diligent to redeem the time, and watch all opportunities, not making their wants a cloak for their negligence. 1

Secondly, Though all men cannot be fitted, as they desire, for secrecy, and solitarinesse to withdraw themselves from company, and noise, yet there is no man that hath an unfeigned desire to perform this duty, but hee may finde some place to do it in, either in the field with *Isaac*, or in the house with *Daniel*, or at least (if they bee hindered all the day long) in his [a] bed with *David*. 2 Gen. 24. 63 Dan. 6. 10 [a] Psa. 6. 7. & 4. 4

Quest. *What time must bee set apart for the performance of this duty?*

1 *Answ.* First, The Lords day is the fittest time in the week for the performance of this exercise: but though it must not bee omitted on that day, yet it must not bee put off till that day.

2 Secondly, Some time convenient must bee set apart for this duty every day, and that must bee observed constantly, as much as wee can, for by that means wee shall bee better enabled to finish this work with better success.

3 Thirdly, No part, nor hour of the day is absolutely necessary to bee kept, neither is a man so strictly bound to observe the time which hee hath chosen, as fit and seasonable that hee should charge himself in conscience to bee guilty of sin, if upon occasion hee change it unto some other. Order in all good duties is

is a cauſe of conſtancy, and conſtant order is a notable means of continuance.

Fourthly, As for the fitteſt hour in the day, a mans own experience muſt inſtruct him, and his occaſions direct him, whether to take the golden hours of the morning, when being awakened, and refreſhed by ſweet ſleep and quiet reſt, hee ſhall finde himſelf free, and fit to meditate upon ſome heavenly matter, as *Jacob* did; or the evening, when hee hath ended his labours, which was the time that [a] *Iſaac* took; or the midſt of the day, which was [b] *Peters* time; or any other part, and hour of the day: [c] *David* and [d] *Daniel* uſed three times a day to pray, and meditate. 4

Gen. 28. 16

[a] Gen. 24. 63.

[b] Act. 10. 9

[c] Pſa. 55. 18.

[d] Dan. 6. 10.

Fifthly, The moſt quiet, and free times (if ſtrength and wake- 5

fulnes will give leave) are the morning, evening, and night season: which were the times approved among the Heathen, who for the better imprinting of any thing in memory, give this counsel (which common experience doth confirm) to think seriously upon it in the evening before they sleep, and to call it again to minde in the morning when they awake: Oh how sweet it is to awake with God in the morning, and to salute him with our first thoughts! How safe and profitable to prevent unsavoury thoughts, and wicked projects, by lodging up in our soul some holy matter worthy our chief employment; and to prepare the heart to walk with God before wee enter into the world! Hee that makes himself well ready every morning, shall pass the rest

Psa. 88. 13. & 119. 48
Psa. 5. 3.
Psal. 63. 1.
Job 1. 5.

of

of the day with much eaſe, and great comfort. It is much with what liquor the heart is firſt ſeaſoned; it it be well prepared with ſome heavenly Meditation before the cares of this life take up the room; it will be kept in better order, in all buſineſſes, occaſions, accidents whatſoever. How fit is it when wee have taſted of the bleſſings of the day, that wee ſhould render unto God the fruit, not of the lips, but of the heart, and come into his preſence from whom wee have received ſo many favours? What more expedient, than that wee ſhould commend our ſelves into the hands of God with confidence, and make our accounts even, being to lye down in his fear? What more excellent recreation after tedious labour, than to recount the mercies of the Lord, his

his fatherly protection, the dangers wee escaped, what service wee owe to God for all the tokens of his love, and what cause wee have to bee humbled for all our sins. Of the night *David* saith, * *My reins shall teach mee in the night season.* God used to speak to his servants in the night by dreams and visions. When wee are freed from cares and incumberances, compassed about with darkness, that outward objects apprehended by the eye, cannot draw the mind away; when all things are quiet, and still, then what greater solace, or sweet refreshing can bee found, than to lift up the heart to Heaven? But these times may bee commended as fit, not urged as absolutely necessary.

1 Psa. 16.7
*Psa. 119. 55.
Psa. 63. 6
Job 4. 13.

6 Sixthly, Every man must set apart some time for this duty, but

but they the moſt, that have moſt leiſure, and opportunity: Meditation is an affirmative duty, which muſt bee taken in hand when the Lord calleth thereunto, and putteth it upon us by affording us means, and ſeaſon.

Queſt. *What ſay you to them that pretend multitude of worldly buſineſſe to excuſe the omiſſion, and neglect of this exerciſe?*

Anſw. It is their ſin, that they will thus ſet God againſt himſelf, as though hee ſhould command them to do that which hindereth them from another duty commanded: God hath appointed unto us our ſeveral ſtandings in our general, and perſonal callings, they are both of him, and the duties belonging to them both will excellently ſtand together, if the Commandements of God bee not contrary.

Nay

Nay rather, wee should think that following of the world to bee too much, which is not ordered and moderated by due consideration, how far, and in what manner wee should deal in the world, so as not to bee hindered from holiness by it, but even to practise holiness in our earthly affairs. If wee bee rich, wee have the less cause to bee holden from Meditation by wordly cares. If poor, wee have the more need of this duty to moderate our care, that it exceed not, nor carry us to unbeleef; What example soever wee have of the contrary in the multitude of worldlings among whom wee live, yet wee must know, though others will not, that wee are not set here in our places to do as loose, and wretched servants, who when they

they go to Market, neglect their Masters business, and mis-spend their time.

Quest. *What course must bee holden to redeem time out of the world for Meditation?*

Answ. First, Walk so on earth, 1
as that thy chief delight bee in Heaven still: use this world as a Pilgrim doth his cloak. Love will finde somewhat to do, they that delight in the world, will make business in the world, as children invent matter of play: But if Christ bee our beloved, and our treasure in Heaven, nothing can hold our hearts from him.

Secondly, Order the affairs 2
of this life wisely, that every thing may have its fit time and season: wee have sufficient allowance for the dispatch of all our labours, if wee take the opportunity,

portunity, and manage both work, and means with discretion. If thy heart bee upright, fear not, God will teach thee how to walk. To the man that is good in his sight, God giveth wisdome, knowledge, and joy.

Eccl. 10. 10

3 Thirdly, Spend not much time either in consulting privately with thy self, or by talking, in company with others, about that whereof there is no use, or which may bee done and ended in a little space.

Thoughts of the world do tickle us, and that may bee determined in a few sentences, and in a part of an hour, which may (if wee take not heed) hold us work the most part of a day. Worldly speech doth so relish to our pallats, that if wee enter upon it, wee cannot tell when to make an end. These two great

great devourers of time must narrowly bee watched against, for if wee waste time needlesly about the things of this life, wee must needs fall short in better matters.

Fourthly, *Gird up thy loins with strength, and what thou dost, do it with all thy might*; thy calling requires labour, trifling will not serve the turn. 4 Pro. 31. 17 Eccl. 9. 10

Quest. *How must wee make entrance into this exercise?*

Answ. After wee have selected something wherein wee have some knowledge, or understanding, wee must make entrance unto it, by some short, yet earnest, and pithy prayer unto God, to guide, and direct us therein by the gracious assistance of his holy Spirit, without which wee shall beat our brains to no purpose. The Heathen began their

their busines with invocation. Of our selves wee are not able to think one good thought, and if in presumption of our wit, invention, memory, learning, or any thing beside, wee set upon this work, the success is like to bee answerable to the beginning: without the help of God wee can do nothing that is good. The matter or form of our prayer must bee this, or such like: Oh Lord, sith it hath pleased thee to give mee a minde ready, and desirous to perform this holy duty (for which I humbly thank thy heavenly Majesty) I beseech thee by thy holy Spirit to assist mee therein, that I may bring the same to a profitable and comfortable issue. Thou hast charged mee, Oh Lord, to seek thy face, that is, thy blessed and holy presence;

Let

Let my soul answer, and say with thy faithful servant, Lord, I will seek thy face; Oh cause the light of thy face to shine upon mee, enlighten my understanding, strengthen my memory, and sanctifie my will and affections; with-hold my ranging and truant-like heart, from all trifling fantasies, deceitful dreams, vain hopes, carnal fears, and worldly cares, wherewith it is naturally and customarily intangled, keep it unto thy self, and unto thy laws, that it may wholly delight and solace it self in thee, and grant that this point that I now go about to think upon, may bee so settled in my memory, and rooted in my heart, that I may reap the fruit thereof all my life long, to thy glory, and my own comfort, and salvation, through Jesus Christ.

Quest. *In what order must wee proceed after the entrance?*

1 *Answ.* First, Wee must first travel with our judgement to inform it, and then make application, that it may work upon the heart: Knowledge without affection is dead and fruitless, Affection without understanding is blinde and inordinate: All good motions arise from sound judgement, and must bee ruled by it, else they will bee as a ship without a Governour, that is in danger to run upon the sands, or to split against the rocks.

2 Secondly, For the helping of our judgement, understanding, invention, and memory, it is good for to call to minde (so far as wee can) what the Holy Ghost saith in the Scriptures of that thing which wee meditate upon, referring the particular passages

paſſages to the ſeveral heads, or places of reaſon. This is a great help to lead us along in our diſcourſe with more eaſe and facility, and to furniſh us more readily with profitable matter, touching the point wee meditate upon; as the marks ſet up in the high-way, direct a traveller in his intended journey; yet wee muſt not be curious, nor ſcrupulous herein, for that would diſtract the mind, and draw us too much from the right end of this holy exerciſe, which is not to practiſe Logick, but to exerciſe Religion, and to kindle piety, and devotion. And therefore it ſhall bee our wiſdome to take ſuch places or heads only, as are moſt pregnant, and ready at hand, and do more eaſily offer themſelves to our mind. But this order cannot bee preſcribed as ne-

ceſſary, but as profitable only. In this wee muſt labour with diligence, and ſincerity, that the underſtanding, or memory, may bee bettered, or confirmed, but the method is left free, as each man ſhall finde it moſt convenient.

3 Thirdly, Our proceeding to inform the mind cannot bee after one manner in all things. We muſt obſerve one thing in our Meditation of God, another of his Works; one of good Duties, another of our Sins: one thing when wee meditate on ſimple theams, another when wee conſider of an intire ſentence. This ſhall bee in a good meaſure made clear by examples hereafter following.

4 Fourthly, Application is the life of Meditation; for the encreaſe of knowledge, and ſtrength-

ſtrenthening of memory, is vain and to little purpoſe, unleſs the affection bee reformed and kindled. It is not the knowledge of good and evil, but the hearty, and unfeigned affecting of the one, with a zealous deteſtation of the other, that makes us holy, and happy. Wee muſt therefore indeavour to have a ſenſible taſte, lively touch, and feeling of that whereof wee have diſcourſed with our ſelves, according to the former direction, that wee may bee affected either with godly joy, or godly ſorrow, godly hope, or godly reverence, &c.

Fifthly, The affections to be quickened, are divers, according to the nature of the thing meditated upon. As for example, if wee meditate on God, or any of his mercies, or 5

benefits, wee must labour with our hearts and affections to feel how sweet the Lord is; that as doting Lovers do inwardly conceive a carnal delight in thinking and speaking of them whom they so love, and of the letters, and tokens they have received from them: So wee may conceive a spiritual joy and contentment by thinking and speaking of the Lord, and of his mercies towards us.

Again, if wee meditate on sin according to the former example, wee must labour to feel

1 King. 8. Jer. 2. 19. *the plague in our own hearts, and to know, that it is an evil thing, and bitter, to forsake the Lord our God, and not to have his fear in us.*

Sixthly, The chief things to bee observed for the quickening and affecting of the heart, are these.

1 Trial,

1 Trial, examination and communing with our selves, wherein wee have offended, or come short of our duty.

2 Taking shame to our selves for our transgressions, joyned with lamentable, and doleful complaining, and bewailing of our own estate, either in respect of the sin that aboundeth, or the grace that is wanting.

3 A most passionate, vehement, earnest, and hearty longing after the removal of this sin, and punishment, which wee hate, and obtaining the good things which wee love.

4 Religious quickening and calling upon our souls, by many strong and forcible reasons, to hate evil, and follow that which is good.

The fifth is an humble, and unfeigned acknowledgement,

and confession of our own weakness and inability, either to remove the evil, or obtain the good, proceeding from a broken and contrite heart.

The sixth is fervent Petition, earnestly craving, and begging this at the hands of God, who is only able to effect it.

The last is chearful confidence, raising and rousing up our souls, after such doleful complaining, hearty wishing, humble confessing, unfeigned acknowledging, and serious stirring up our selves, and earnest craving of what wee want, grounded upon the most sweet, and sure Promises of God, made to them that call upon him in Faith, and upon the experience which the Saints of God in all ages have had of the success of their sutes, who were never sent

empty

empty away, but either obtained that thing which they begged, or that which was much better for them; but these things are specially observed in Meditation upon some grace, or sin, as will bee made more evident, and plain, by examples, and are not ever necessary, that they should bee particularly observed.

Quest. *What is to bee observed for conclusion of this exercise?*

A. First, We must begin when the heart is fitly disposed, or at least labour to bring it into order, before wee set upon this duty, and break off before the spirits bee dulled, and tired, otherwise we shall lose the comfort and sweetness of it. 1

Secondly, It is not good suddenly, or abruptly, to break off, except some unavoidable neces- 2

sity

sity of company or business do urge us thereunto.

3 Thirdly, The conclusion of this exercise consists principally in these things.

1 Hearty thanksgiving to God, that hath vouchsafed in such gracious measure to assist us in the performing of this duty.

2 Recommending our selves, and our waies to him, that our life, and carriage, and all our thoughts, and actions afterwards, may bee answerable to those heavenly thoughts and desires which wee have had, and express in the performing of this duty.

3 Renewing our covenant to live by Faith, and to walk with God in all holy conversation.

Quest. *Declare this by some example, and first, how should wee meditate*

meditate on God his infinite excellency?

Answ. Entrance may be made thus into it. Oh Lord, my heart desires to commune with thee, that I might come into better acquaintance with thy Majesty; but of my self I have no ability to conceive what is right, or to think a good thought concerning thy highness: Teach mee therefore, Oh gracious God, if not to comprehend thine excellency, for that is impossible, yet so to confer with thee, that I may apprehend in some measure how thou hast revealed thy self, and what thou wilt bee unto mee: that knowing thee in thy power, goodness, truth, soveraignty, and grace, I may unfeignedly cleave unto thee all the daies of my life.

Quest. *How must wee proceed*

in

in this Meditation?

Answ. Wee must consider of his titles, properties, and works, observing how infinitely hee exceedeth what excellency soever is in any, or all the creatures in the world. [a] *Oh Lord, thou dwellest in the light unapproachable, whom man never saw, neither can see and live*; thou art incomprehensible by reason, and unnameable by words, thy name is wonderful, and thy nature secret, I cannot comprehend what thou art, I will labour to know what thou hast revealed; I am not able to behold thy face, let mee see thy back-parts, for this is my life, and joy of heart to know thee the onely true God, which springeth, and increaseth daily as I come to the fuller knowledge of thee: and shall bee infinite, because thou art infinite.

[a] 1 Tim. 6. 16. 1 Joh. 4. 12. Exod. 33. 20.

I beleeve as thou haſt taught mee (according to my manner, and meaſure) that thou art a Spirit, without beginning, without cauſe, the firſt and abſolute being, living in and of thy ſelf; giving being and life to all creatures; infinite, eternal, incomprehenſible, without compoſition, one in eſſence, and three in perſons; moſt perfect, a meer act, bleſſed, and glorious: all-ſufficient in thy ſelf, for us a great reward, void of all poſſibility to bee what thou art not; great in power, infinite in wiſdome, abundant in goodneſs, everlaſting in compaſſion, rich in mercy, faithful, ſincere, conſtant in thy promiſes, unchangeable in thy love, gentle, eaſie to bee entreated, juſt and righteous in all thy Commandements, and Proceedings: the moſt abſolute, univerſal Gen. 17. 1.

niverſal ſoveraignty of all things both in Heaven and Earth: Thy name is wonderful in all the world, for thou haſt created all things, and by thy appointment they continue unto this day. Thou haſt laid the foundation of the earth, and it abideth, thou haſt ſtretched forth the heavens, as a curtain, and in them ordained a Tabernacle for the Sun. Thou ſtilleſt the raging of the Sea, and the proud waves are quelled by thy command: the day is thine, the night alſo is thine, the Moon and Stars are the work of thine hands: Thou thundereſt from Heaven by thy voice, and bringeſt the winds out of their treaſure; thou breakeſt up the deep, and cauſeſt the ſprings to aſcend in the vallies. Thou cauſeſt the graſs to grow upon the mountains,

Job 9. 7, 8, &c.

and

and satisfiest with thy goodness every living thing. The earth, Oh Lord, is full of thy goodness, but thy glory shines most bright in the assembly of thy Saints. Oh what wisdome, power, grace, mercy, love, long-suffering hast thou manifested in Jesus Christ, the brightness of thy glory, the image of the invisible God? what great admirable things hast thou done for thy people? thou hast reconciled them being enemies, redeemed them being bond-slaves, justified them being sinners, of vassals of Satan thou hast adopted them to bee thy sons, of unclean and polluted, thou hast washed, and made them clean: Thou guardest them with thy Angels, protectest them against dangers, feedest them with fatness, and marrow, and hast reserved for them

them the Kingdome of Heaven. All thy Works praise thee, Oh Lord, and thy Saints bless thee.

Great is the power, wisdome, holiness, and glory of the heavenly Angels, but they are finite, created, dependent; great, immortal, glorious by participation only, not able to behold the glory of God; great is the renown, dignity, dominion of earthly Monarchs, but their persons are mortal, their glory fading, their Dominion temporary, their power limited, what they are, they have by deputation, during pleasure: As for our God, hee is an infinite, eternal, absolute, independent soveraign: *His Kingdome is an everlasting Kingdome, and his Dominion endureth throughout all* Psa.96.1,2 *ages, Before the foundations of the earth were laid, and ere the*

Moon

mountains were formed, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God. But Lord thine excellency far exceedeth all that I can conceive; for what can a finite understanding comprehend of an infinite being? I know very little of thy waies, much less of thy nature; yea what thou hast revealed of thy self in thy Word, doth rather make known what thou wilt bee to thy people, than what thou art in thy self. *As the Heavens are higher than the Earth, so are thy waies higher than our waies, and thy thoughts than our thoughts.*

Quest. *How are these things to bee laid to heart, and pressed upon the soul?*

Answ. Wee must stir up our selves to desire full knowledge of God, and free communion with him, to trust, love, reve-

rence, glory in his name; and to walk before him in all humility of mind. Bleſſed is the man that knoweth the Lord, and cleaveth unto him in love, fear, and affiance: yea happy is the man whoſe God is the Lord. Look unto God, Oh my ſoul, obſerve his waies, ſeek his face, and labour after more intire fellowſhip and familiarity with him. The knowledge of God is excellent, eaſie, comfortable, it perfecteth the underſtanding, ſeaſoneth the will, changeth the affections, rejoyceth the heart. The worth, and excellency, the profit, and and delight that knowledge bringeth, is anſwerable to the object which is apprehended, in which the knowledge of God hath infinitely the prehemi-nence. Nothing can rejoyce the heart, in which the goodneſs of God

God is not felt, nor his power, wisdome and mercy seen: Oh how sweet and delightsome is it to behold the face of God as it shineth in Jesus Christ, to contemplate the happy Reconciliation of justice and mercy, by his unsearchable wisdome, to think upon his long-suffering, tender love, and never-fading compassion! Love the Lord, Oh my soul, and trust in his mercies; serve him with fear, and rejoyce in his holy name, for hee is thy strength, thy rock, thy portion, thy salvation. His favour is better than life; in his presence is fulnes of joy; hee is goodnes it self, the highnes of all good things that can bee desired. The pleasures of the world are vain; earthly gain breeds great vexations, worldly honours vanish and come to nothing; but God is Trial.

our pleasure, glory, gain, everlasting, immeasurable; But woe is mee, my sight is dimm, my judgement vain, my heart carnal, my affections disordered, my thoughts loose, I know little of God, I have been very negligent to seek acquaintance with him. These vain things below, the gifts of Gods bounty have stollen away my heart, from the giver of every good and perfect gift; If men speak, I tremble, if they smile, I rejoyce, in their presence I am reverent, if superiours; chearful if friends; if absent, I long for their company; if present, I desire to give them content; if in distress, I mourn; if in prosperity, I rejoyce; when separated from them in body, I am with them in spirit: If I bee ignorant of the things of this life, I inquire after them; if I have

have sustained loss, I fall out with my self for it, am pinched at the heart, learn wisdome, against another time, and labour by double diligence to redeem it again: But I have greatly neglected the knowledge of God, when hee threatneth, I am senseless; in his presence, I am irreverent, dead-hearted when I appear before him; lumpish in Prayer, loose in Meditation (scarce lifting up a thought to Heaven) soon tired in the Meditation of heavenly things, never well till my thoughts bee set at liberty, to range up and down, not moved to hear thy name dishonoured, little affected with grief when I have offended. I am ashamed and confounded in my self to hear, and see the wisdome of worldly men in the affairs of this life, when I am so

Taking shame.

rude, and ignorant in the things that concern my eternal happineſs. The Oxe knoweth his owner, and the Aſſe his Maſters crib; but I am not acquainted with the Lord my life, my light, my portion, from whom I have received what I am, in whom I look to bee eternally bleſſed: Ah wretched man that I am. I look for reverence from mine inferiours, for love from them of whom I have deſerved little, to whom I can ſhew ſmall kindneſs. If men give not credit to my Word, I take it grievouſly, but in theſe things I have offered wrong to the Lord of life, who is glorious in Majeſty, dreadful in power, plentious in goodneſs, moſt conſtant in his promiſes. Oh that mine eyes were open to behold the glory of God, and my heart inclined to love

Hearty wiſhing.

love him unfeignedly, intirely, above all things; Oh that my soul were close united to his fear, that I should solace my self in his favour, and stand in awe of his displeasure, that I might not sin against him: Awake, Oh my soul, rouze up thy self to seek the knowledge of God in Christ, whom to see is eternal happiness: What contentment canst thou take in any thing, if God bee not seen in it? If the eye of the body, wherewith wee behold this light, bee annoyed or dimmed, wee will seek far and wide for help, and shall wee not labour to have the eye of our spirits cleared, wherewith we see the Lord, the Son of Righteousness, the light, and joy of every Christian? Raise up thy self to love, reverence, and trust in the Lord; Thou canst not compre-

Stirring up our selves.

hend his goodneſs, which is immeaſurable, his power, which is unſearchable, his truth, which is firm, and immoveable; as his infiniteneſs paſſeth thy conceit, covet the more inſeparably to cleave unto him: Couldeſt thou comprehend his nature, hee ſhould not bee all-ſufficient in himſelf, nor able to ſatisfie thy deſire: But as God is infinite, and never to bee comprehended eſſentially; ſo is our joy in him bottomleſs, our help from him moſt certain, and our love to him ſhould bee above meaſure, our confidence in him without wavering. Oh my God, I do confeſs before thee, that I am miſerably ſtained with ignorance, unbeleef, irreverence, I am full of carnal wiſdome, harlotry love, vain fear, fleſhly confidence, corrupt joy; But grie-

Humble acknowledgment.

vouſly

vously wanting in true knowledge, sound faith, sincere love, and holy reverence of thy holy Majesty. Nor is my want greater than my inability to help my self: the dead cannot restore himself to life, nor the blinde to sight, supernatural graces must come from above; Therefore unto thee, O Lord, do I direct my supplication, give mee grace to know thee as my chief happiness, to love thee as the perfect good; unite my heart unto thee in Faith and Reverence, that nothing may draw mee aside from thy testimonies. It is thy promise to write thy Law in my heart, and to put thy fear in the inner man; Oh Lord, thou art able to do what thou wilt, and thou wilt accomplish what thou hast spoken; unto thee I commend my soul, and upon thee

Petition.

Confidence.

I will relye as long as I live.

Queſt. *Let the holy Angels be a ſecond inſtance; how are wee to proceed in the Meditation of that ſubject?*

Anſw. Wee muſt conſider their author, nature, properties, eſtate, end, and offices.

The Angels are more excellent than man, but inferiour to the Almighty, from whom they received their being in time according to his good pleaſure, and by whoſe goodneſs ſuch as abode in the truth were ſtill preſerved in their being, and bleſſed condition.

The truth hath taught us to define them to bee ſpirits, finite, compleat, immortal, made after the Image of God, who through his grace and goodneſs abode ſtill in the eſtate of innocency and bleſſedneſs; they are created

ted ſpirits, limited in eſſence, compounded of ſubject and accident, act and poſſibility, immortal by participation, mutable by creation, but eſtabliſhed by grace in their firſt ſtate.

As ſpirits, they are inviſible, immaterial, incorruptible, intelligent; as chief inſtruments of Gods providence, they are furniſhed with great power, incredible ſwiftneſs, ſingular wiſdome, burning zeal, and undoubted faithfulneſs; as bleſſed Miniſters that ever attend his Throne, they are indued with clear knowledge of God, ineſtimable love, exceeding joy, and admirable glory.

Their life is ſpiritual, their ſtate bleſſed, and permanent, for they ſtand ever in the preſence of God, behold his glory, and reſt in him with full delight.

Their

Their End, and office, in reſpect of God, is to praiſe his Name, and execute his Commandement; in reſpect of Chriſt, to miniſter, and attend upon him; in regard of men, to rejoyce at the converſion of a ſinner, to guard and protect the faithful againſt the dangers of this life, and the aſſaults of Satan, to curb, bridle, and deſtroy their enemies, and to gather the elect together at the day of judgement.

Queſt. *How are theſe things to bee preſſed, and urged, and applied unto the heart?*

Anſw. 1 Wee muſt ſtir up our ſelves to admire the power, goodneſs, and glory of God in himſelf, his tender care over us, rouze up our ſouls to the obedience of Gods will, and reſpect of his children, and take courage

to

to rely upon God in the midſt of dangers that compaſs us about; who would not fear thee, O Lord, our God, glorious in Majeſty, dreadful in Holineſs, wonderful in Power! Thine holy Angels excel in ſtrength, are cloathed with glory, that man cannot behold; but all their might and goodneſs is derived from thee, a drop of thy Ocean, a beam of thy Sun; if the glory of the creature bee ſo great, the glory of the Creator muſt infinitely ſurpaſs all comprehenſion. Oh how blockiſh am I, that in the view and contemplation of the work, have not enlarged my heart to laud and magnifie the work-man?

Ariſe my ſoul, and gird thy ſelf to the chearful, ſincere, faithful obedience to Gods Commandement. To do the will of God

is

is Angelical preferment, a divine and heavenly exercise, the greatest freedome and perfection. Make haste, delay not to exercise his good pleasure. Loe the Angels in Heaven are thy samplers, whom thou oughtest to follow. Let not that seem irksome to thee, that is delightsome to them: esteem it not a burden, which is to them an heavenly solace, and refreshing. Ah wretched man! why should I grudge to yield obedience to my heavenly Father, or do his will negligently by the halves, when those Noble spirits, and heavenly souldiers do alwaies stand in readiness, to receive his commands, and execute their commission? Doth the world despise the poor Saints of God for their outward baseness; yet I will honour them as the onely excel-

lent, for God is their Father, the Angels their Attendants. Wee cap, and bow to them that are nobly attended, gorgeously arrayed, honourably served, but herein the Saints excel, if the thing bee well considered. They are esteemed the scum of the world, but respected of God in such manner that hee hath given his Angels charge over them; the guard that attends upon his Throne is assigned to watch over them. Walk on couragiously, O my soul, walk on couragiously in the waies of piety. Fear not the assaults of Satan, the fury of any adverse power that shall oppose it self; for more are with thee, than can be against thee. If Satan with his bands endeavour thy destruction, The troops of heavenly Angels do watch for thy defence, yea,

yea, the Lord himself is thy keeper, and stands at thy right hand to save thee from all them that rise up against thee. How great is the clemency, and tender care of the Lord over his poor people? what tongue can express, what heart comprehend his infinite goodness? hee sends from on high his mighty souldiers to encamp about us, watch over us, preserve, and save us, from them that lye in wait to vex, and annoy. Oh my Father, what can I render unto thee for this thy great kindness, and unspeakable mercy? I have nothing to give but my heart, which here I offer unto thee; and because I am weak, exposed to the temptations of Satan, and allurements of this wicked world, I pray thee give mee thy grace, confirm, and strengthen

mee,

mee, that I may imitate those pure spirits every day more and more, that I may praise thy Name, execute thy Commandements, love thy Children, rejoyce in the conversion of them that go astray, and fight thy battels against sin and Satan.

Quest. *Let man bee the third example; how must wee proceed to meditate on that Subject?*

Answ. For the better information of our judgement, wee must consider these particulars; the Author, the Matter, Form, End Properties, and Effects, what are like, and what opposite. Man is inferiour to the Angels, but of earthly creatures most excellent.

The Author of this principal work is God himself, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and that in special manner; for other

beauty, ſtrength, convenience meet together. The diſtinct conſideration of every member with its temper, proportion, placing, figure, and uſe might well aſtoniſh: The ſoul of man was immediately created of nothing, and being indued with moſt excellent faculties and gifts natural and ſupernatural, was infuſed into the body, and inſeparably knit (had not ſin made an unnatural divorce) to give life, motion, and ſenſe unto it: Thus man was made the wonder of the world, the principalleſt of living creatures, indued with a reaſonable ſoul, moſt divinely qualified, and ſtrictly united to that earthly maſs to quicken and inliven it.

The end why man was made in reſpect of God, was the glory of his power, goodneſs and wiſdome,

wisdome, appearing in the work it self; of his justice in rewarding man if obedient, and in punishing man if disobedient; of his grace and mercy redeeming him fallen into the gulf of misery, and that man should praise and magnifie his glorious name. In respect of man, that hee should live blessedly for ever if hee did obey: man by creation was immortal, for death is an enemy, no consequent of nature, but a companion of sin; man dieth not because his body was framed of the dust, but because hee is infected with sin: Subjection to mortality, and all miseries accompanying it, is a fruit of disobedience. 1 Cor. 15. 26.

Hee is reasonable and intelligent, able to think, invent, judge, devise, compose, discourse, remember, chuse, refuse,

ſuſpend, and affect. Theſe powers being eſſential to mans nature do ſtill remain, but very weak, and corrupt ſince the fall. Alſo to man is given power to eat, drink, ſleep, weep, laugh, and ſpeak, whereby hee may communicate to others whatſoever hee conceiveth: hee was perfectly conformable to the will of God, made after the Image of God, in knowledge, righteouſneſs, and true holineſs; But the Image of God is defaced with ſin, there remaining onely ſome reliques in us, as the ruines of a magnificent and ſtately palace, that ſerved to ſhew what once wee had. Moreover in the ſtate of innocency, man was honoured with great Royalties and Prerogatives, for hee had liberty to eat of every tree in the Garden, except the

tree

tree of knowledge of good and evil; and was made ruler over all earthly creatures, that hee might freely use them to the glory of God, his own necessity, and lawful pleasure: But these priviledges hee hath forfeited by rebellion against his Creator.

The effects of man are suitable to the faculties, and gifts hee hath received, as to know God, call upon his name, worship him sincerely, preach the Word, administer the Sacraments, govern, give counsel, contemplate the works of God, read, write, confer, and dispute, exercise the works of virtue, and honesty, govern the affections, reverence superiors, live peaceably, and such like. But in all these things wee have much dis-inabled our selves

by wilful disobedience.

Would you see the prime dignity of man by comparison? In soul hee is like the Angels, invisible, immaterial, immortal, beautified with understanding, will and power, inriched with admirable, divine gifts, whereby hee resembleth God, or carrieth his Image. In body hee is the perfection of all earthly things whom they are to serve. In both hee is the Epitome of all created excellency in Heaven and Earth.

Quest. *How must these things bee applied unto the heart for the quickening of affection?*

Answ. Wee must stir up our selves to magnifie the goodness of the Lord towards man-kind, to shame our selves in conscience of our sins and misery: raise up the heart to the contempt of earthly

earthly things, and love of obedience, and seek unto God to have his Image repaired in us again, through Jesus Christ. *Lord, what is man that thou visitest him, the son of man that thou so regardest him. Thou hast made him little inferiour to the Angels*, adorned him with grace, stamped upon him thy Image, invested him with dignity, *and crowned him with glory and honour. Thou hast given him Dominion over the work of thy hands, and put all things in subjection under his feet*: Thou hast made him for thy service, his soul to bee thy habitation, his body to bee the Temple of thy spirit, and all other things to bee serviceable unto him, the world, and all that is therein for his use. All things are prepared for him; all things are subject to him, Psal. 8. 4, 5, 6, &c.

him, hee ruleth over all living creatures, they labour for him, obey his command. Lord thou art the glory of man, man the receptacle of thy works, thy wisdome, and power: But as mine excellency by creation exceeds, so doth my shame and misery by sin and disobedience: The higher mine advancement, the lower my fall. This was my chief honour and title, that I was the Image of God; This is my disgrace and ignominy that I bear the Image of the Devil: This is my comfort, that God did love, delight, and desire to dwell in mee, it is my misery that I am cast out of thy favour, and lye under wrath: Ah what grief is this to think, how my condition is altered, through my foolishnes: once immortal, now mortal; once pure, now impure and

and polluted; once rich in wisdome, and grace, now blinde, and naked; once the Image and free servant of God, now the vassal of Satan; once at peace with God, my conscience, all creatures, now at war with his Majesty, my self, all the world: Once a free man to walk at liberty, now a bondslave that can doe nothing but sin; once the Ruler of all creatures, now of all creatures the basest (Satan excepted) once subject to no annoyance, now secure from nothing that might offend. If a Noble man fall from height of honour, to great contempt and bitter extremities, hee is much afflicted: much greater cause have I to bemoan my folly, who have cast my self headlong from Heaven unto Earth, even to the gulf of misery

sery and confusion. Oh my soul, why dost thou forget thy self, so much as to affect the base things of this life? It is a shame for him that was to subdue all things, to suffer himself to bee subdued by men, and to become a Lacquey to his vile affections, doing honour to the three great Idols of the world, profit, pleasure, and preferment. The world is too vile for thy delight, thou art created for more divine service, the Lord himself covets thy love.

The glory of the world is put under thy feet, as things to bee trodden upon, that which thou shouldest affect is far above, heavenly and glorious. If the fashion of the body should bee so changed, that the face and eyes bowed to the earth continually, should never bee able to look up,

up, it would bee grievous: But if the ſoul which ſhould bee lifted up to God, do creep upon earth, bee glued to worldly, vain delights, the alteration is more uncomfortable and monſtrous. Hee that ſubdueth the world, doth yeeld himſelf to the ſervice of God, which is perfect liberty; But when wee become ſlaves to the world, wee labour to make God ſervant to our luſts, which is moſt abominable, and accurſed. The glutton makes God his caterer, his belly his God, and himſelf the gueſt; The covetous worldling would have God his Broker, and himſelf the Uſurer; The angry ſinner would have God his executioner, and himſelf the Judge; The ambitious inquiſitor can ſometimes make God and Religion his ſtile, but honour ſhall bee

bee his God, and luſt reign. The Lord himſelf is abaſed in our eſteem. Love the Lord, Oh my ſoul, and give thy ſelf to the obedience of his Commandements, thou art the perfection and end of all creatures, the Lord thy life, perfection, comfort: what thou art, is of him, that thou ſhalt bee happy, is of his goodneſs; thou oweſt him thy ſelf, thou waſt created for his glory; defile not his Image, pollute not his workmanſhip, bee not unthankful for what thou haſt received; forget not thy own eſtate. O heavenly Father, I heartily deſire to follow thee whitherſoever thou ſhalt lead mee, to do what thou ſhalt command, and to cleave unto thee as long as I live: But I finde the fleſh rebellious, ſolliciting daily, yea, and violent-

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ly haling to those things that are evil: Ah miserable wretch that I am, who shall deliver mee from this body of death? Thou, Thou Lord onely art able, and willing to vouchsafe help, and succour: To thee therefore do I flye, I pray thee have mercy upon mee in Jesus Christ, and repair the lost image of thy self. Thy hands have made mee, and fashioned mee, give mee understanding, and I shall live: thou createdst mee pure, thou canst restore mee, though corrupt. Create in mee a clean heart, and renew a right spirit within mee: Breathe into mee the Spirit of Life, and establish mee in the way of thy Precepts; Heal my soul, for I am defiled, and cause mee to grow up unto the perfect stature of a spiritual man. I have wounded my soul,

but

but cannot cure it, defaced thy Image, but cannot fashion it anew: Look upon my misery, dear Father, forgive my sin, and make mee a new creature for thy infinite mercy, begin in mee this good work, and perfect it to thy praise; in thee do I trust, to thee I seek for grace, for in thee the fatherless finde mercy.

Quest. *I would know in the fourth place, how wee might proceed to meditate on Gods infinite greatnes?*

Answ. God is infinitely good, without quality, infinitely great, without quantity, his excellency is incomprehensible, and surpasseth what wee can speak or think. But for our proceeding in this Meditation according to our capacity, wee may consider, what it is, what bee the parts of it, and how incomparably it exceedeth

ceedeth whatſoever might bee likened unto it. *Great is the Lord, and worthy to bee praiſed, and his greatneſs is unſearchable.* Pſa. 145. 3

Our God is the God of Gods, and Lord of Lords, a great God, mighty, and terrible, who being both the original and end of all things, cannot rightly bee ſaid to bee any thing; for hee muſt needs bee above all, and better than all. Such is his greatneſs, that hee is that one, infinite, and eternal being. *See how that I, even I* (ſaith the Lord) *am hee, and there is no God with mee: I lift up my hand, and ſay, I live for ever.* Deut. 10. 17. Deut. 32. 39.

Thou Lord art ſo great, that thou art moſt perfectly one in eſſence, one in number: *The Lord hee is God, and there is none beſides him.* As thou art * one in eſſence, ſo art thou one in thy * Deut. 4. 35. Mark 12. 32. 1 Cor. 8. 4, 5, 6.

purpose, determination, promise: For how shouldest thou that art one in number and essence, bee otherwise than thy self? All things do turn upon this point, and hasten to this center: if it were not unity, multiplicity would destroy it. Thou Lord art infinite, without all limits of essence, without matter, or form, efficient, or end; thou art without all dimensions of length, breadth, or thickness; thou art without all limits of place, and yet fillest all places in Heaven or Earth; Thou art wholly without, and within all, and every place; no where excluded, and no where included, and that without all local motion, or mutation of place.

[a] Job 11. 8, 9. [a] *Thou art higher than the Heavens, deeper than Hell, longer than the Earth, broader than the Sea.*

Sea. [b] Simply and purely every where by eſſence, and preſence. *A God at hand, and a God a far off.* Thou moveſt or changeſt all things, without either motion, or change in thy ſelf; thou art in every place preſent, in every place entire; within all things, and contained in nothing; without all things, and ſuſtained by nothing; but containeſt, ſuſtaineſt, and maintaineſt all things. Thou art unſpeakably preſent in every place by eſſence, power, wiſdome and providence, but thy glory is ſpecially manifeſted to the Angels, and Saints in Heaven; thy grace, power, and mercy, to the Saints on earth, whom thou doſt favour, with whom thou dwelleſt, for whoſe deliverance thou wilt ariſe, and have mercy, into whoſe hearts thou wilt ſhine com-

[b] 1 King. 8. 27. Pſa. 139. 7. Iſa. 66. 1. Act. 17. 27.

Job 36. 22. &c. 1 Tim. 1. 17. 2 Pet. 3. 8.

comfort. Thou art eternal, before and after all beings, without all limits of time, past, present, and to come; Thou art at all times, but without respect of time, an everlasting, and immortal God, before, and after all times, and in all times for ever and ever. Thou art the King of ages, the maker of times, the Inhabitour of eternity. [a] *Before the mountains were made, and ere ever thou hadst formed the earth, from everlasting to everlasting thou art God*: Everlasting in thy self, in love, in the fruits of thy favour, towards thy people, which thou hast chosen, in wrath and indignation against the obstinate, and disobedient. O God thou art great, and wee know thee not, neither can the number of thy years bee searched out; All powers on earth come

[a] Psa. 90. 1, 2. Isa. 57. 15. Psa. 92. 7, 8. & 102. 12, 13, 26, 27. Isa. 41. 4. & 43. 10, 11. Jer. 10. 10 Isa. 40. 28. Isa. 40. 15, 16.

come ſhort to bee ſhadows of thy greatneſs; *The Nations are as a drop of a bucket, leſs than nothing, and vanity before thee.*

Queſt. *How muſt wee apply theſe things to the heart?*

Anſw. Wee muſt ſtir up our ſelves to magnifie the Lord, love, fear, reverence, and truſt in him for ever. *Great is the Lord, and worthy to bee praiſed: for hee ſitteth upon the circuit of the earth, and ſtretcheth out the Heavens like a curtain: He bringeth the Princes of the earth to nothing, and lifteth up the meek to honour: Great is our Lord, and of great power, his underſtanding is infinite.* The men of this world labour to ſet forth the ſtate, and magnificence of earthly Monarchs, the largeneſs of their dominions, greatneſs of their power, continuance of their

houſe. Oh my ſoul, why art thou ſo ſilent, awake, and ſing aloud of the praiſes of God, whoſe greatneſs is infinite, eternal, incomprehenſible, thou canſt not by ſearching finde him out: but remember to magnifie his work, which men behold. Every man may ſee it. Man may behold it afar off; Love the Lord, Oh my ſoul, and ſtick faſt unto him as thy life and treaſure. Hee is that infinite, unbounded, eternal goodneſs, paſſing all humane both ſearch, and ſight, that filleth and includeth all things. Alaſs, how do wee affect a thouſand things that cannot bee effected, or if obtained, do vaniſh, or cloy, and can no more ſatisfie deſire, than ſalt water quencheth thirſt? Oh that true love, like a ſtrong ſtream, which the further it is from this

head of eternity, would run into it with greater violence. In Gods love there is no mixture of ſorrow; no want of delight, fulneſs of pleaſure, all manner of contentment. Alas! alas that ever ſo many cold winds of temptation ſhould blow betwixt God and our hearts, to make our affections cooler unto him. What dull metal is this wee are made of? wee have the fountain of felicity and eternity, and yet complain of want and wearineſs. Do wee freeze in the fire, and ſtarve at a feaſt? Have wee God to injoy, and yet pine, and hang down the head? Let mee have my God, and let mee never want him, ſo ſhall my joyes bee laſting, pure, incomprehenſible: for poſſeſſing him that is the pure, eternal, and an all-ſufficient good, how ſhould I not

finde fulneſs of joy, and contentment in him? Oh my ſoul, fear the Lord, and ſtand in awe of his Majeſty, for hee is a great God, and terrible, a King above all Gods. At his preſence the earth trembleth, the mountains quake, and the foundations of the world are ſhaken: The Angels cannot behold his glory, the Sun and Moon are not clean in his ſight. Fear the Lord, and depart from iniquity; harbour no wicked plot in thy breaſt, contrive not evil in thy thoughts: for thou haſt to deal with a God that is light of hearing, who dwelleth in thy heart, and knoweth thy Imaginations long before: And what needs any other evidence when the Judge is witneſs? His eyes are as flaming fire, his feet are as burning braſs, hee will tread down the wicked

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in his wrath, and vex them that hate him. Serve the Lord with fear, and commit thy ſelf to him in well doing. Truſt in the Lord at all times, and ſtay upon his mercy. Hee is the everlaſting Rock, conſtant in promiſes, ever preſent for our aid, unchangeable in love and favour. No place can hinder God from doing us good; diſtance, or difficulty may bee impediments to all the creatures to ſtay their help, but God at a bluſh fills all places, to comfort, or confound (as it pleaſeth him.) Hee that is freed from dimenſions, may pierce, and penetrate, enter and paſs whither hee pleaſeth, without probability, or poſſibility of reſiſtance. Hee hath created the world, and yet is not weary, his proviſion is no whit abated, his power nothing diminiſhed

Hab. 1. 12. Pſa. 55. 18, 19.

nished: Let him carry us which way hee will, make the passages never so troublesome and perillous, yet the same hand that makes them hard, will make them sure; and if wee bee faithful to him, will master all the difficulties for us. Let him cast us into such great miseries of long continuance, that hee seem to forsake us, as if hee would not return to our help, yet wee know that hee is everlasting, the Holy One of *Israel*, who cannot leave them for ever that rely upon him. O God, as I have trusted thee with the beginning, so will I trust thee with the finishing of my glory: And though never so many or main hinderances of my salvation offer themselves, and after all hopes threaten to defeat mee, yet faithful art thou who hast

pro-

promiſed, who wilt alſo do it.

Queſt. *I would now hear how wee muſt proceed to meditate on the Love of God?*

Anſw. Wee muſt conſider of the efficient cauſe, ſubject, end, objects, effects, properties, and kinds of this Love; what is like, what oppoſite unto it.

The Love of God ſignifieth either that love whereby God loveth us, or that affection whereby wee being united unto God, do reſt in him with pleaſure and delight: Of this Theological virtue firſt, in order, not the firſt, in fruit, and continuance, the greateſt, the end of the Commandement, the bond of perfection, the fulfilling of the Law, I purpoſe to meditate by the grace of God. This Love is a grace ſupernatural, and is neither in us by nature, nor Joh. 5. 42. 1 Joh. 3. 17 1 Joh. 2. 15

nor can bee acquired by our endeavour. Yea, the measure of love is not defined according to the endeavour of the received, but the pleasure and will of the Spirit measuring and pouring it into every one.

The author, or principal cause of Divine Love, is God himself, by his blessed Spirit renewing, and regenerating our hearts to the love of his Majesty. *Love is the fruit of the Spirit*[a]. [b] *He that loveth is born of God. Love is of God, and God is love*: Hee loveth us in his well-beloved, and is the ever-springing fountain of all love in us. The Spirit openeth our eyes to see and behold the incomprehensible goodness of God, without which there is no love: For of a thing unknown there is no desire. The same Spirit infuseth the grace of

[a] Gal. 5. 22
[b] Joh. 4. 7
Eph. 6. 23.

love

love, whereby wee are enabled to love God, and quickened unto it; whereas of our selves we are destitute of all power and ability to every spiritual duty. And the *Spirit sheddeth abroad the love of God in our hearts*, whereby they are warmed to love God again: The means which the Spirit useth for this purpose, is the Word of Grace revealing the incomparable love of God in Jesus Christ towards us most miserable wretches. Rom. 5. 5

The less principal cause of love is man renewed by the Spirit. Man regenerate doth love the Lord, not of himself, but by the grace of God: *The Lord thy God will circumcise thy heart to love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul.* Faith well rooted will animate, quicken, and move love. Faith 1 Joh. 4. 7 Deut. 30. 6 [a] Gal. 5. 6 *Quantum cognoscimus, tantum diligimus.*

and

and Love are both graces supernatural, infused at once in the same instant of time; but in order of working, Faith hath the precedency, and kindleth Love.

From this it followeth, that the subject of Love is a renewed heart, inlightened with the true saving knowledge of God, purified by Faith, and seasoned by Grace. For Love is a spiritual affection in the reasonable part, presuppoſing knowledge, and affiance, whereby the soul goeth forth to imbrace the good it apprehendeth.

The end of Love is the possession of God as the chief good. Love (as wee see) makes man and woman one, and so it doth couple us to God. It is a weight whereby the heart is inclined toward God, and wholly carried unto him.

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The object of Charity, is God in Christ; God is to bee loved, not only as hee is good, mercifull, gracious, long-suffering, and bountiful; and as hee doth love, and daily lade us with his blessings: But also as hee is wise, just, and powerful; even as hee doth chastize and visit us with severe corrections: For as the true love of children towards their Parents doth effect this, that they love their Parents, and perswade themselves that they bee beloved of them, though they bee reprehended, crossed, corrected, and cannot obtain what they will; so true Love doth look to God when hee sendeth persecution, war, sickness, or any other calamity. God is to bee loved in Christ, in whom hee is well pleased, greatly delighted in us: If any man

man love not the Lord Jesus, let him bee accursed. Christ hath redeemed us unto God, and reconciled us being enemies. Hee is ordained of God to be our Lord and King, advanced at the right hand of his Father, to give salvation unto *Israel.* Love is a supernatural gift or Grace, whereby wee
* Psa.63.8 Josh.22.5. Deut. 4.4 * cleave to God in Christ, and desire to possess him with joy, and comfort.

The acts, or effects of Love, presuppосed, or comprehended under it, are these.

1 First, To acknowledge God to bee the chief good, and with most earnest desire to bee carried towards him, that wee might bee united to him.

2 Secondly, To rest, delight, and rejoyce in him, and to desire nothing above him, nothing against

gainſt him, nothing equal unto him.

Thirdly, To ſeek the advancement of his glory, and to think, will, ſpeak, or do, what is acceptable in his ſight, whether wee have to deal immediately with his Majeſty, or others pertaining to him: Hee that loves God, will love what the Lord loveth, and hate what hee hateth, do what hee commandeth, and forgo whatſoever is forbidden; *Whoſo keepeth the Word, in him verily is the love of God perfected.* 3 1 Joh. 2. 5.

Fourthly, To neglect no occaſions which are or may bee offered for the exerciſe of piety: Love is diligent, and laborious. 4

Fifthly, To love them that fear God, for his ſake, and to draw as many as poſſibly they can, to the knowledge, and obe- 5

dience of the truth: If wee love
1 Joh.4.12 one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us.

The Properties of Love are,

1 First, It cannot bee loſt; the act of Love may bee intermitted, but the grace cannot bee loſt; for the gifts of God are without repentance; the life of grace is everlaſting.

2 Secondly, It is imperfect in this life, and ever wanting ſomewhat that may bee added to it; for as long as wee live here, it is far ſhort in degree to that the Law requireth.

3 Thirdly, It is ſincere and entire for nature, though for degree defective. True love is not maimed in parts, though it bee not come to full growth.

4 Fourthly, It increaſeth by degrees in this life, and ſhall bee perfected in Heaven: When Faith

Faith shall cease, then Love shall come to full strength, and glory. Not that the Saints can love God in measure answerable to his goodness, and excellency: for a finite virtue cannot infinitely love the infinite God, the infinite Beloved; but their love shall bee preserved so far as a creature is capable.

Fifthly, It is most pure and comfortable, free from all mixture of sorrow and vexation: Men, though never so loving, are compassed with infirmities, subject to passions, and many things may befall them; they may do somewhat that is to us occasion of grief, and pain: but in the Lord, each Christian heart shall ever finde matter of solace and refreshing, never of vexation, and discomfort, if the fault bee not in himself. Oh the ex-

cellency of Love, what is it but the gate of Heaven, the beginning of everlasting happiness, not the least portion of that glorious inheritance which wee shall then fully possess, when love is grown to perfect ripeness!

The degrees and kinds of love are diverse. Wee love God for good things received, or benefits past; wee love him also for the good wee expect, that is eternal happiness, with the comforts of this life; and wee love him for himself, and for his own glory. God is to bee loved for himself, and not for another end, form, or efficient; for hee is the last end of all things, his essence is perfect goodness, his goodness is from himself, and not from an external efficient: but nothing hinders why God should not bee loved for his blessings received, or hoped for. Each

Each grace of the Spirit is for original divine, in nature excellent, for use necessary, bending towards Heaven: but if comparison bee made, love must have the preheminence for use and continuance. The dignity and sweetness of love will appear by the baseness of what is opposite: That is best whose contrary is the worst: Now what is more abominable, hateful, pernicious, so full of vexation, and horrour, as the love of sin, love of the world, and hatred of God? As continual fear, unquietness, discontent, doth accompany these with eternal confusion in the latter end: So unspeakable joy, peace, contentment, security do wait upon it; and the end shall bee everlasting glory, and full fruition of God, in Heaven.

Quest. *How must these things*

bee applied to the heart?

Answ. Wee must stir up our hearts, to the hearty, intire love of God, by examination, taking shame to our selves for our manifold slips, and great slackness, complaining of our great bondage, and inability to raise up our souls, hearts, wishing and longing to bee fired with the love of God, calling upon our selves to bee more hot, and fervent, and seeking unto the Lord, by earnest, and hearty prayer.

Love the Lord, Oh my soul, and all that is within thee, love him with all thy strength, and let his glory bee dear unto thee, for hee is the object of love, gracious, merciful, long-suffering, abundant in goodness, and truth: hee is thy Father, thy God, thy Husband, thou art bound unto him by covenant; his

Affectus amoris pro objecto habet pulchrum & bonum.

his love to thee is free, and of meer grace; thy love to him is debt, many waies due from thee, deserved by him: Hee loves thee for thy profit, thou art to love him for thy own good, for in his love stands thy perfection: Hee is the chief good, absolute, all-sufficient, the rest, and stay of the mind, beyond which it can desire nothing, in whom it findes incredible joy, and comfort, and shall possess everlasting consolation, when it is immediately united to him by vision, and love. The former blessings thou hast received, the future good things thou dost expect, and look for, do challenge this duty at thy hand. Publicans and sinners love those that love them, and for kindness return affection: God hath loved thee first, loved thee when thou wast

not, when thou wast miserable: Hee hath laden thee with his benefits, given thee more than thou wouldest desire, and prevented thee with favours which thou never didst ask; hee made thee of nothing, hee is thy preserver, redeemer, Saviour, who hath delivered thee from death, and hell, and vouchsafeth unto thee, life and mercy; his blessings upon thee are innumerable, pass all thought and reckoning. What canst thou render less than hearty affection for these inestimable favours? Oh my soul, thou canst not love thy self truly, if thou love not him above all things, for thou art coupled to him by love, in whose presence is fulness of joy, without whom to bee, is to bee most miserable. Thou canst not but desire happiness, but happy

py thou canſt not bee without love. But ah wretch that I am, I finde mine affection is weak toward God, ſtrong to vanity. Thoſe wee love, do wee not love to bee preſent with them? If they bee abſent, do wee not think long till they return again? Are wee not grieved to hear them wronged by word or deed, whom wee eſteem dearly of? are wee not deſirous to give them content? doth it not cut us if wee do them any harm? Are wee not with them in thought, though abſent in body? glad of a letter that comes from them? is not the meſſenger welcome that can bring us tidings of their welfare? But I finde little joy in coming publickly or privately into Gods houſe, or preſence. I think little of him, and that but overly,

ly, I ſpeak little to him, and that not without wearineſs and diſtraction. Nay, I am like thoſe children, who can play abroad all the day long, and never care to look unto their Parents: When did my heart long to return home, and to bee with Chriſt? Though God through ſundry troubles do even ſmoak mee out of this world, yet I will not come away in mine affection. When I ſee Gods name blaſphemed, and all wickedneſs committed, do mine eyes guſh out with tears? or do not I offend daily, and paſs it over, taking too light penance of my ſelf? It is irkſome to mee to do his will; I do not long for his preſence, nor bewail his abſence; I do not ſtudy to pleaſe him in all things, nor can I rejoyce in the proſperity of his Saints: when I my

ſelf

ſelf am in miſery and diſtreſs, I cannot prize his favour, am not cheared with his promiſes, do not delight in his ſtatutes above all things: His Word is his Letter ſent unto mee, but I am not glad and diligent with care and conſcience to read it; vanity hath ſtollen away my heart, and the tranſitory bewitching pleaſures of the world (which cannot profit) have taken up my thoughts. This hath been mine impudent behaviour againſt thee my God, which I cannot with any words of indignation ſufficiently diſcover.

If a woman ſhould bee dead in the neſt, when her husband were before her, but ſhould bee affectionate to every ſtranger; if ſhee ſhould not care how long ſhee were abſent from him, but think her ſelf beſt while they were

were asunder; if shee cared little how her loving husband were offended, casting that at her heels, which hee takes to heart, were not this shameless behaviour in her? And shall I not bee ashamed to shew no more love to thee, to whom my soul is married in Christ? Oh my soul! what canst thou finde in the world, why thou dost affect it? it hath bred much vexation and sorrow, thou hast been crossed and molested with it, the more thou lovest it, the greater trouble & discontentment thou findest therein, and wilt thou still take pleasure in thy pain? what canst thou not finde in God, and that above all thought and conceit, why thou shouldest intirely cleave unto him? what occasion couldest thou finde at any time to draw thy affection from him?

him? wilt thou leave the fatneſs, and marrow that is in the houſe of God, to feed upon the refuſe, and ſcraps that this world affords? Ah wretch that I am! who ſhall deliver mee from this bondage of ſin? I am full of uncharitable and falſe love, I can love my ſelf, I have affection enough to the things of this world, to the gifts of God, and thoſe the meaneſt, more than to the giver; as harlots to rings, gold, bracelets, more than to the ſender. But I have not power to raiſe my ſoul to the love of God in Chriſt, here my affections lye dead, and will not mount aloft. Oh that the love of God did poſſeſs my reins in ſuch ſort, that in thought I might bee ſtill with him, rejoyce in his preſence, and walk before him in dutiful obedience!

Oh

Oh that my heart did burn with love that is ſtrong as death, hot as coals of Juniper, that hath a vehement flame that no waters can quench, no floods can drown, no allurements can draw aſide. Why art thou ſo dead, Oh my ſoul? why doſt thou not lift up thy ſelf to the love of God? whom haſt thou in Heaven but him? and who in earth is to bee deſired in compariſon of him? for whom doſt thou reſerve thy prime affection? for the world, ſin, vanity? Oh adultereſs, knoweſt thou not that the amity of the world is enmity with God? thou haſt gone aſtray, and deeply defiled thy ſelf with the love of ſin, return now unto the Lord, and embrace him with moſt intire and dear affection: what thou haſt beſtowed upon the world, pleaſure, luſts,

lusts, carnal delights, to thy great discomfort, now set it wholly upon things above, that it may finde rest and comfort. Oh Lord, I beseech thee, who art only able to purge my heart ofall filthy, prophane love, and to fill it with the pure love of thy holy Majesty, this is thy promise, I will circumcise your hearts, and make you love mee with all your hearts; therefore I am bold to make this prayer, and will confidently wait upon thee for this mercy.

Quest. *How should a man proceed to meditate on the Fall of our first Parents?*

Answ. Hee must consider the subject, causes, and end of that act, aimed at, but not obtained; the degrees, properties, and effects of it.

By the Fall of our first Parents,

rents, wee understand the first sin of *Adam*, and *Eve*, whereby they transgressed the Commandement of God, in eating the forbidden fruit: this is fitly so called, because, as an heavy body falling upon some hard and sharp rock is greatly bruised, and hurt: so man, after hee had received so many, and great gifts from God, sinning wickedly against his expres charge and commandement, did grievously wound himself.

The subject of this transgression was our first Parents *Adam*, and *Eve*, made after the Image of God, perfect in stature of body, and strength of mind, enriched with excellent prerogatives of liberty and dominion, planted in a garden of delights, that they might dress it, and keep it, favoured of God, and admitted

admitted into near fellowship with him.

The principal outward cause of mans disobedience, was Satan, the Prince of darkness, that old murtherer, who being fallen from God, and shut up under condemnation, did with incredible fury, and malice, seek the dishonour of God, and the destruction of mankind: This envious one spying his opportunity, set upon the woman, as the fitter to be made his prey, when shee was alone; and by his subtilty beguiled her; The Serpent, the most subtil of beasts, which the Lord had made, was the instrument that hee used to seduce the woman; and the woman her self being first in the transgression, was made the willing instrument of her husbands destruction. The quality of the

fruit as it was good for meat, and pleasant to the eye, was by accident a cause that moved them to eat, which yet they might, and ought to have forborn, having liberty to eat of all the trees in the garden besides, and being strictly charged upon pain of death not to taste of it. The just, and good Law of God was a blameless occasion of mans sin, as it did forbid an act in it self indifferent, that it could not bee done without sin. The Law and Sin, as well as the Law and Obedience, work together, though in a distinct manner: for of Obedience the Law is a principal cause, but of sin an accidental, as working besides his own scope, and main drift, which is to favour nothing but life, and also as a contrary to sin. The Lord in his wise providence

did

did work in the fall of man, as the Law by accident was occasion of it, but hee is not the author of his sin, hee did not constrain him to offend, not withhold from him any grace, that by Covenant, or otherwise hee was bound to give him.

The principal inward cause of this transgression, was the will of man, freely turning from the Commandement of God, which hee might and ought to have obeyed, but would not, and willingly hearkening to the suggestion of Satan, which hee should have resisted, but did not. The sin of man was the eating of the forbidden fruit, not absolutely considered in it self, but in respect of the Commandement and charge whereby God had severely forbidden the tasting of the fruit of that tree,

and had threatned punishment to them that should transgress.

In evil actions no end can properly bee assigned, for the end is of a good thing, and to be desired. But Satan in that temptation aimed at the dishonour of God, and the damnation of Man. Man being deceived by the old Serpent, proposed this end to himself, but obtained it not; that hee might satisfie his superiour affection to the Image of God, and his inferiour to the fruit of the tree. The Lord, who bringeth light out of darkness; out of his infinite wisdome did order this evil to the setting forth of his mercy, and justice, and the utter confusion of Satan, contrary to his purpose, and intendment.

In this their disobedience wee may observe these degrees. The

impression

impression of the suggestion; obscuration of their thoughts concerning the excellency of God; forgetfulness of what was done before, and what God commanded; doubting of the truth of God; tickling of ambition, whereby the woman affected great power, dignity; credit to the flatteries, and allurements of Satan, and familiarity with him, and inclination of will to the forbidden fruit.

First, This was the first sin committed by man, in it self most hainous: the fountain of all other evils, both of sin and punishment. Many things do shew the greatness of this sin. 1

1 It was the transgression of that precept which God had given for the trial of mans obedience, and so was an absolute denial of subjection, and renoun-

cing of obedience: As the performance of it had been an open profession of submission and due obedience. It was not a breach of some particular Commandement, but an universal denial of all the branches of obedience.

2 It was intollerable, that man being inriched with so many graces, priviledges, and blessings, should presently forget God, being so much indebted, and bound unto him in love for his inestimable favours.

3 Amongst so many trees in the Garden, it was easie for man to forbear the pursute of one; and being made after the Image of God, hee might have resisted the temptation of Satan: Wherefore to suffer himself to bee drawn away in that man-

manner was an hainous offence.

4 This sin was committed in Paradise, where the tree of life stood in their sight, and God had manifested himself unto them familiarly. In respect of God, the Law, the Offender; this sin was hateful, and notorious.

Secondly, This sin was not 2
the proper sin of our first Parents, but the common sin of all their posterity, who were in their loins when they did offend, and afterwards by natural propagation descended from them: for they did represent all mankind, which was propagated from them as the root.

Thirdly, The effects of this 3
sin stayed not in the first authors of it, but spread, and stretched themselves over all mankind:

For if they whose Parents are infected with any disease, their children do possess it by inheritance; how is it possible that our first Parents, being deprived of the Image of God, wee their posterity should spring of them perfect, and without maim? For the beginnings of all things are all that in power which doth spring from those beginnings, for the virtue that is in the beginnings, is communicated to the things which receive beginning from them: Like egg, like bird; what is in the root will bee in the branches, and the vice or fault that is in the beginning, is common to the thing begun. The punishment of this sin doth degenerate into sin, As the want of holiness, and proneness to evil, is not only a judgement inflicted for sin, but it is sin, and

the

the cause of sin; One sin begets another, and the second is an effect of the former, both properly, and accidentally.

The effects of this first sin are bitterness it self, to wit, in respect of mankind in general, wrath, blame, guilt, deprivation of Gods Image, corruption of nature, spiritual bondage, subjection to death temporal, and eternal. God is offended in that his Commandement is despised to the derogation of his soveraignty; sin is vile, and naught, deserving blame; man is guilty, and tied to punishment, whence issueth griping of conscience, fear of the angry Judge, and dread of punishment. The loss of original Justice followed the act of sin, in whose room succeeded corruption of the whole man, in every power,

and

and faculty. Thus the liberty of man was turned into miserable servitude, and hee became bondslave to sin-revenging justice, as his principal Lord; to the Devil, and his Angels, and to the power of his accusing and condemning conscience, as the Lords Ministers. Moreover, the natural man hath no spiritual liberty, to do any thing spiritually good, as hee did before sin entred, but is led as a slave, by lusts, by passions, by objects, which please him: So that hee is in a brutish bondage. *And death entred into the world by sin, and is gone over all men, for as much as all men have sinned.* Rom. 5. 12

In respect of *Adam*, and *Eve*, the effects are common to both, or particular to either.

1 The common are sense of nakedness, shame, fear of the angry

angry Judge, flight, and desire to hide themselves from the presence of the Lord, ejection out of Paradise into the cursed Earth, and stopping the way that they might not enter to eat of the tree of life.

2 The particular effects in respect of *Adam*, are, that the Earth is accursed to bring forth briars, and thorns; that he should till the ground in labour, and eat his bread in the sweat of his brows, till hee return unto the dust.

The woman was sentenced to conceive and bring forth in sorrow, and to bee in painful subjection to her husband.

Satan intended the dishonour of God, and destruction of mankind by that temptation: but it turned to his confusion, and overthrow. The seed of the

woman

woman hath bruised the Serpents head; his power is crushed, and his devices frustrated.

Nor did the instrument of the Devil escape unpunished: the Serpent is accursed above all the beasts of the earth, most wretched, and ashamed to appear abroad; hee is adjudged to creep upon his belly with pain, to eat the dust for meat; a grievous diet. And the Lord hath put enmity betwixt him, and the woman.

All sin, especially prophanation, and contempt of the Sacrament, is like to this of our first Parents in some sort, but this was the first sin, the fountain of all sin, the sin of man and his posterity: for *Adam* received, and lost integrity both for himself and us.

Quest.

Queſt. *How are theſe things to bee applied unto the heart?*

Anſw. Wee muſt work our heart to humiliation, ſtir up our ſelves earneſtly to ſeek help and deliverance, and acknowledge the juſtice of God in correcting, and his incomprehenſible mercy, in vouchſafing means of recovery unto man. How is man fallen from his firſt dignity and good eſtate? hee was created holy, and happy, furniſhed with grace, and ſet in place of high renown. Thou Lord didſt crown him with glory and honour, and gaveſt him a patent for his poſterity, that they ſhould live in bleſſedneſs before thee. But wo is mee! what alteration do I finde? Man hath ſinned, and God is diſpleaſed. Man that was the beauty of the world, the beloved of God, is now the map

map of misery, the object of divine revenging justice: His mind is besotted, his conscience unquiet, his will and affection poisoned with sin, fear, dread, horrour, and trembling possesseth his reins; his body is naked, deformed, subject to annoyance of heat, cold, distemper many waies. The Free-man of God, the Lord of the creatures, is brought into most miserable, and sore bondage unto Satan, sin, his own conscience; who can comprehend the miseries of this life, whereunto hee lyes open? No words can describe the spiritual plagues that are seized upon the soul already, nor the dreadful torments that are prepared for him in hell for evermore. Oh my soul, enter into thy self, consider, and bewail thy natural estate: thou

art

art exposed to suffer a thousand evils, to weariſome vanity in every thing, yea through fear of death, the upshot of evils, thou art in bondage all thy dayes, while in that state thou abidest. *Pharaoh* did never put *Israel* to such hard service, as the Devil putteth thee to while thou art under his power. Thou art sick, filthy, naked, crooked, fallen from the love of God, more odious in his eyes than the stink, or filthy savour of a dead corps in the nostrils of man, exposed to the torments of Hell, shut up under the curse of the Law, abidest under wrath. How do men of the world take on, when they have lost a great friend, upon whom all their hopes depended, when they bee cast from the top of honour, into the gulf of misery, poverty, and

and disgrace? weep, oh my soul, and pour out tears in secret, for thou hast lost thy glory, art spoiled of thy ornaments, and hast provoked the Lord to anger by thy inventions. The brute beasts take it as a grievous thing to bee insnared, and taken, and wilt thou laugh in the midst of bondage, and count it liberty to bee a slave of Satan? Death is terrible, and wilt not thou fear Hell, which followeth after it, as a desert of thy transgression? Ah miserable man, and the more miserable, that thou art senseless of thy misery; yet now that I know my disease, I will seek for remedy. The sick person will take bitter pills to recover health, the bondman desires liberty, the captive freedome, the condemned a pardon: My present case is very wretched,

and

and in no case to bee rested in. Nature teacheth all creatures to shroud themselves from dangers, or being in distress to seek help without delay, much more am I to bee moved with mine estate, who am subject to eternal death, which hath already seized upon mee in a spiritual death of soul, and mortality, or dying state of the body; wee will meet a disease betime, labouring to rid our selves of it; if any thing threaten our name and estate, wee will indeavour quickly to free the one, and the other: But whither shall I fly for succour? where shall I finde the Physician that is able to cure, and redeem mee from the tyranny of Satan? Set mee free from the fear of Hell? I am even at my wits end, not knowing which way to turn. Oh

Lord, I am utterly destitute of all means to help my self, it is not in my power to satisfie thy justice, overcome death, or deliver my soul out of the hands of the Devil: I cannot think a good thought; I know not, nor of my self can know the way of Life, or means of my recovery. Blessed God, as of thine infinite mercy thou hast ordeined, so I pray thee reveal unto mee the way how I may escape eternal death deserved by my sin, and bee made partaker of everlasting happiness, through thy special grace. Righteous art thou oh Lord, and just are thy judgements, I know that in very faithfulness thou hast afflicted mee, and that I have deserved much more than ever I felt from thee; Thou mightest have cast mee for ever out of thy presence,

sence, and given mee my portion with the Devil, and his Angels: But loe thou dost correct mee in measure for my good, to purge mee from sin, and bring mee unto repentance, that I might bee saved. Oh my God, I will magnifie thy name, for thou hast redeemed my soul from death, my darling from the power of the doggs. This mercy was not shewed to the Angels, Creatures more excellent than man. Should one redeem us from the state of villanage, or ransome us from the Gallows, wee would think wee could not bee thankful enough; But Lord thou hast redeemed mee from revenging Justice, from the power of the Devil, holding mee under the curse, from the power of conscience justly condemning mee,

from the power of sin commanding as King: How great is thy mercy towards mee! I am not able to comprehend it. *As my sin and misery hath abounded, thy mercy hath abounded much more.*

Quest. *Let us now hear what order is to bee observed in Meditation of sin?*

Answ. Wee must call to minde, and discourse with our selves of the causes, ends, properties, and effects, and kinds of sin: what is contrary unto it, what like, and what unlike.

O my soul, what is sin wherewith thou art beset and stained, yea miserably besotted, since the fall of *Adam?* what is it but the privation of Gods Image, and corruption of the soul, an aberration from the rule of perfection, an evil disposition of the subject, turning aside from the path

path of life, and swarving from the mark and end that all should aim at?

God is the fountain of all good things, the giver of every good and perfect gift; but sin was not created by him, can receive no approbation from him. God cannot possibly sin; for hee may work besides his rule who may sin: But Gods Rule is his most just and wise will, which hee cannot but work after, no more than hee can deny his own nature. God cannot bee the author of sin in and with his creature, as hee is of every good word, and work; for that which the creature doth, God being the author and principal worker of it, hee must inform the manner of it by his Commandement, and work it in him by his Spirit: But it is

impossible for the creature to sin, in working after that which is commanded him of God; God cannot so far will sin, as to approve it for good in it self; it hath no proportion to his nature. It is such a thing as hee cannot bee author of in the creature, nor yet the creature work while it keepeth communion with him, wherefore God cannot allow it as good in it self. The Lord perswadeth to obedience, threatneth the sinner, commandeth the practice of holiness, punisheth the disobedient. Hee is just and holy in himself, in all his waies, and cannot bee tainted with the least spot or blemish: *Thou oh God temptest no man, as thou canst not bee tempted of evil*; and if it bee not of God, it cannot bee good; for hee is the absolute original good-

Jam. 1. 13.

goodneſs, from whom cometh every good by participation.

The cauſe of ſin is ſome voluntary agent, that worketh beſides Rule, and comes ſhort in goodneſs required: Sin it ſelf is an aberration, the ſubordinate and deficient cauſe of ſin, is Satan, or man himſelf revolted from God; Satan ſoliciteth, the fleſh inticeth, the will conſenteth, and ſo ſin is finiſhed: The Devil was made an Angel of light, but hee abode not in the truth, and being fallen from Heaven, ceaſeth not to draw others into the ſame perdition. God made man righteous, but hee found out many inventions; this is the cauſe, but what is the end of ſin?

Of evil there is no end, for that is never good; No gain to bee gotten by that which is

naught and vile; the poisoned stalk can bear no wholesome fruit. Satan in tempting aimeth at mans perdition; Man in sinning intendeth the satisfaction of his lusts; The Lord doth by his providence order it to the glory of his name; but of sin properly there is no end to the sinner: God takes occasion by sin to give the promise of the Mediatour. Hee can use sin for a punishment, for the exercising of his children: No speech from *Shimei*, but sinful, reviling speech was *Davids* exercise; but yet the goodness that cometh by sin is not of, nor through it by nature, but from the infinite wisdome of God, who knoweth how to work good out of evil.

Rom. 1. 24.

Let us somewhat inquire into the properties of this poison: every sin is mortal in its own nature;

ture, it deſerveth and bringeth death endleſs, and eaſeleſs, of ſoul and body; for it is a turning aſide from God, who is the life of the ſoul; it is a breach of his Law, an offence againſt his infinite Majeſty. If a man ſin againſt the Majeſty of an earthly Prince, hee is puniſhed with temporary death, or perpetual impriſonment, if hee could bee ſuppoſed to live alwaies hee ſhould lye in for ever: How much more deſervedly am I ſubject to eternal death, who have ſinned againſt an eternal God? Every ſin in its own nature is accompanied with final impenitency: Hee that ſinneth once, can never ceaſe to ſin by any natural power; ſin is a running leproſie, that cannot bee ſtayed; the ſoul that is once diſtempered, muſt go amiſs for ever:

ever: (if it bee not rectified by supernatural power.) It is of grace that sin is pardoned, it is of supernatural power that any soul is set free from the power and tyranny of it. For being once enthralled by voluntary submission, wee cannot after draw back and work deliverance. Sin is of a soiling nature, and defileth all it toucheth; Every good work and holy ordinance. To the unclean all things are unclean. The Word, Prayer, Sacraments, Alms, every thing is polluted by that touch. Corrupt qualities are more apt to hurt, than sound to heal; one rotten sheep may infect the whole flock, but cannot bee cured by them. One filthy ragg stained with the plague may infect a whole pack; but the clean garment cannot purifie it.

it. If a common garment touch holy flesh, the garment is not sanctified, but the flesh polluted. The prayer of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. Sin mixed with Gods ordinances, is like poison mingled with wholesome meat, that corrupteth it for our use and nourishment.

Mark and consider well the effects of sin, O my soul! the waters of this fountain are bitter, the fruits of this tree unsavoury. They that sow iniquity, shall reap vanity; and they that follow vanity, forsake mercy. Affliction pursueth sinners, and shall overtake them to their cost: without question the wages of sin is death. Look as it is with men, if they turn themselves from this aspectable light, they are forthwith environed with darkness: So man turning away

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by his sin from God the Father of lights, from whence every good gift cometh, hee cannot but bee forthwith in outward and inward darkness. By reason of sin the soul is dead in ignorance, and lust: So that they have in them a seed apt to bring forth every sin: Our bodies have mortality as a worm corrupting them, our conditions are exposed to a thousand vanities, and wearisome courses, and these are the beginnings of evil. Despair, darkness, fear, horrour, and shame are the companions of sin; disgrace, sickness, poverty, loss of goods, the best fruit it beareth. Hast thou lost any blessing? sin hath robbed thee of it; dost thou want any good thing? sin keepeth thee from it; art thou annoyed with evil? thy perdition is of thy self; sin sets man

man at odds with God, the Law, his own conscience, all creatures, and with himself. Oh what a drudge is man made to his lusts by sin! what confusion, vexation, bitterness, doth lodge in the heart continually! Look into the world, and see what desolations it hath made. How are the mighty slain, and glorious Kingdomes laid on heaps? Is not sin the cause of all disorders, wars, confusions, bloodsheds, famines, and pestilences that ever were in the world? The sorrows of this life are many and grievous, but nothing comparable to spiritual and eternal miseries that sin bringeth with it. Oh that thou didst behold how miserably the soul is mangled, defaced, wounded, imprisoned by it; the light of nature, terrour of conscience, power of grace

grace is not able to set forth or comprehend the desert and fruit of sin; for the full wrath of God which shall bee executed upon the ungodly, exceedeth all that can bee imagined. If the wicked prosper for a time, sin turneth their blessings into curses: The Table, and by proportion, the wealth, strength, and honour of the wicked are dangerous snares wherein they are caught to bee destroyed. It is misery to sail to Hell with the pleasantest wind; and to live in fat pastures to bee fed unto eternal slaughter.

This cursed sin is a monster of many heads, a serpent with many stings, the kinds cannot easily bee reckoned, the number passeth all count. It is original that is born and bred with us, or actual that is brought forth by us:

us: That is the filthy corrupt fountain, this the filthy ſtinking puddle-water that runneth from it; that the curſed root, this the bud, and bloſſome of that venemous tree.

Again, there are ſins of defects, omiſſion, and commiſſion; for ſometimes the ſoul worketh for matter that which is required, but in other manner than God hath preſcribed; Sometimes it doth ſuſpect, and ceaſeth to move after the good commanded, and ſometimes it doth move it ſelf to ſomething which is forbidden, which is the greateſt, and higheſt kinde of evil. For as in a wife, not to love her husband is a great lewdneſs, but not only to neglect his love, but to turn to the embracement of ſtrangers is much more hainous: So for the ſoul not

not to cleave to God in doing righteousnesse is sinful, but to leave him, and turn to love and like any kinde of unrighteousnesse, this is most sinful.

Moreover, it is either inward, lurking and boiling in the heart, by evil thoughts, motions, desires, wishes, consent, or want; and slackness to think, devise, remember, and effect what is praise-worthy; or outward, breaking forth in life and conversation, both in word, and actions.

Sometimes it liveth in us, but lieth dead, and stirreth not with violence; and sometimes it rageth boisterously, and carrieth us headlong to that which is forbidden.

Sometimes it rusheth immediately and directly against God, and sometimes it reacheth more pro-

properly to the hurt of our neighbour. Oh my soul, look into thy self, and thou shalt finde the branches of this venemous tree to exceed in number. Thou hast sinned against God, thy neighbour, and thy self; thou hast sinned of ignorance, infirmity, negligence, and presumption; Thou hast been led away with the lusts of the flesh, the lusts of the eye, and pride of life: Sin ever moveth, oftentimes stirreth violently, and over-ruleth many times to the committing of what is evil, and hinderance of what is good. Thou hast offended in that which is evil in it self, and thou hast come short in that which is good and honest, not doing it at all, or failing in the manner, measure, and circumstances: Who can tell how often hee of-

fendeth? The number of my sins cannot bee reckoned, nor the filthinesse discovered.

Piety is amiable, lovely, honourable, sin loathsome and abominable. The fear of the Lord makes the face to shine; but impiety and sin dis-figure the face and Image of God in him. The man that feareth the Lord shall bee praised; but a vile, naughty person, is had in contempt of God, and good men, how great soever hee bee in this world. The righteous is more excellent than his neighbour. Grace exalteth the poor; sin debaseth the mighty. Godlinesse makes a man as like to God, as a creature can bee like to the Creator, but sin transformeth us into the likenesse of the Devil. No man is honourable, but the virtuous, none base,

baſe, but the ſinner.

Sin is oppoſite to God in a ſort, not by an inward poſitive repugnance, or contrariety to his nature, ſuch as is twixt fire and water; but in reſpect of outward diſagreement, ſuch as may bee in a creature from the Creator: Even as the good created, though it hath not an inward agreement with, and reſemblance to the Creator, ſuch as is betwixt nouriſhment, and the thing nouriſhed, for then ſhould the divine nature inwardly in it ſelf bee better for it, and neceſſarily will it; yet hath it an outward agreement and reſemblance. So is it moſt true of ſin, that it hath no inward diſagreement to the Divine Nature, for then it ſhould bee the worſe for the being of it, and ſo ſhould neceſſarily nill it; but outward only.

The venome and filthineſs of ſin is ſet forth by ſundry compariſons in the holy Scriptures: Sinners are compared to Doggs, Swine, Vipers, Aſps, Bears, Tygers; Sin is known by the name of Rebellion, Diſobedience, Filthineſs, Adultery, Playing the Harlot. It is likened to menſtruous clouts, & filthy raggs, that are caſt aſide upon the dunghil, and deteſted of all that paſs by. It is a ſpiritual nakedneſs, a ſpiritual leproſie, a ſpiritual crookedneſs, a ſpiritual drunkenneſs. It biteth as a Serpent, and ſtingeth as a Cockatrice; creepeth as a gangrene, or deadly canker, that eateth to the heart, and cannot bee cured. It is hony in the mouth, but gravel in the bowels, ſweet in the beginning, but death in the latter end. Oh my

ſoul,

soul, if thou peruse the holy Scriptures, thou shalt finde no book, no leaf, no chapter, nor scarce any verse wherein there is not some precept, promise, prohibition, threatning, or example, which serveth to shew the amiableness of virtue, and ugliness of vice, and with what care, zeal, watchfulness, the one is to bee imbraced, and the other to bee shunned.

Quest. *How are these things to bee pressed upon the heart?*

Answ. Wee must work the heart to humiliation for sin; stir up our selves earnestly to seek pardon, and labour for grace to have sin in detestation for the time to come. Is it even so, Oh my soul, is sin so loathsome and abominable, odious to God, contrary to godliness, pernicious to thy state, life and spi-

ritual welfare, more infectious than the plague, more ſtinking than any carrion, the rottenneſs and corruption of the ſoul condemned and cryed down in every book, in every leaf, and almoſt in every verſe of the holy Bible: Woe therefore, and alas to mee that have ſo long layen under this burden and bondage, and that even many times willingly and wittingly. When I look into my ſelf, I can ſee nothing but a maſs of corruption preſſing mee down. Mine underſtanding covered with ignorance, vanity, and folly; I know nothing as I ought to know, ſuch deadneſs poſſeſſeth my heart, that I cannot look up: my ſoul is a very den, and cage of unclean motions, worldly deſires, corrupt projects, vain boaſtings, idle rovings; but

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marvelous barren, untoward, toward that which is good: Infidelity, distrust, pride, self-confidence, blockishness, unthankfulness, envy, malice, discontent, covetousness, do lodge with mee continually. I was born in sin, and it hath grown up with mee from my youth; so that it is become exceeding strong, an old stinking, deep festered sore, that can hardly bee cured. My sins are multiplied exceedingly, increase daily, in number they pass the sands by the Sea, and are become a burden too heavy for mee to bear. When I remember these things, I wonder at my self that I should bee thus senseless in the midst of all misery. Were I descended of one that had been executed for treason, and so were pointed at as a traiterous brood

without inheritance in earth; Had I but with my nature, the ſtone, or leproſie, or falling-ſickneſs from my Parents, I ſhould bewail mine unhappy nativity: But my condition is much more wretched; for deſcending from the loins of *Adam* by natural propagation, with my nature I received the poiſon of ſin, which hath corrupted every power of ſoul, and like a running leproſie, ſtaineth all it toucheth: I am unclean by birth, and whatſoever I touch, it is unclean. Were I with *Job* from top to toe covered with biles, it would grieve mee, but my whole ſpirit is fraught with corruption, more filthy than that which breaketh forth at the eye, ear, &c. I am aſhamed of corporal nakedneſs, deeply affected with lameneſs, or deformity; if

over-

overtaken with any loathſome diſeaſe, I grow weary of the world, and wiſh to bee ſeparated from the ſociety of men: But the nakedneſs, deformity, corruption of ſoul and life is more ſhameful, and loathſome, filthy, and abominable. Deep is the ſtain that ſin hath made, and great is the danger that I am in by reaſon of my tranſgreſſions. If I had offended the Law, and ſtood as guilty to bee cenſured before the Tribunal of an earthly Judge, with loſs of liberty, limbs, or life, I ſhould bewail my eſtate, and condemn my folly; but I have broken the Law of God, and ſtand guilty before him, not of temporal, but eternal death, which the Law hath pronounced, and I may expect every moment to bee executed upon mee: Wherefore I abhor

hor my self, and repent in dust and ashes: Oh that mine eyes were a river of tears, and mine head a fountain of water, that day and night I could bewail the misery into which I am plunged by reason of my sin! But woe is mee, what shall I do? whither shall I fly for succour? I am bound with the cords of sin, who shall unloose them? I am guilty before the Throne of Justice, who shall acquit mee? I am defiled, who shall make mee clean? Humble thy self, oh my soul, and fly unto the Throne of grace, for with God there is mercy, and with him there is plentious redemption; against him thou hast sinned, and with him there is forgiveness; acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou mayest bee received unto mercy; judge thy self, that thou

mayest

mayeſt not bee judged. How well is hee that ſleepeth with his *quietus eſt* in his boſome? In this regard Gods children have followed God more for this, than for deliverance from evils that have been upon them: *Bleſſed is the man whoſe iniquity is forgiven, and whoſe ſin is covered.* Oh happy man, who is ſtirred up to fly the wrath to come. Thou art in danger to bee caſt into the priſon of Hell for thy debts, thy ſins; which make thee debter of puniſhment to Gods juſtice. Humble thy ſelf, compound with thy creditor before his heavy arreſt bee ſerved upon thee. Shouldeſt thou have to deal with many men, thou mighteſt have a cold ſute, but ſeek mercy of God, none that cometh to him doth hee caſt forth. And now my ſoul bee

warned

warned for the time to come, to take heed of sin, turn from it with hatred and detestation, bee purged from it (as a thing filthy and abominable) It is the most deadly poison, a fretting leprosie, a corruption, in comparison of all others, most detestable. Wee would not suffer spots on our face, nor lint or other soil upon our cloaths; surely wee cannot make clean any thing, but thou mayest thence take the rise of this thought, how careful should I bee to cleanse my heart? wee would not have any natural infirmities, which are unseemly or filthy, as wry-mouths, foul breeches, lameness, or halting in our gate, &c. But a tongue speaking perverse things, rotten speeches, crooked walking from Gods Law, and the direction thereof, are

are far more uncomely than the other. If wee go by a foul ſtinking place, wee ſtop our noſes, and haſte away; if an ugly ſhape preſent it ſelf, wee ſhut our eyes, and indure not the view of it: Thus ſhouldeſt thou, Oh my ſoul, with indignation turn from all filthy and abominable vices. It is enough and too much that thou haſt diſhonoured God in time paſt, and gone a whoring after ſtrange lovers, return now unto the Lord, and keep thy ſelf chaſte unto him for ever. To ſee a childe war with his loving Parents, or a wife contend with her kinde husband, is a deteſtable ſight, for any ſubject to rebel againſt his Prince, is wretched lewdneſs, but for one to rebel againſt ſuch a Prince, which out of his boun-

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ty hath moſt highly advanced him, and done him favours from day to day, this is moſt loathſome diſloyalty. Thus it is with ſin, which offendeth a moſt kinde and merciful Father, who hath redeemed us from death, and daily ladeth us with his bleſſings: Oh that I could once finde out power and ability to weed out corruption, and to pluck it up even by the root; Oh that I were able to deſtroy the root and bud, and branch of this curſed tree, that it might never ſpring, or bear fruit any more: But alas, I ſenſibly perceive that there is in mee no ſtrength, no more than there is in a ſick man to recover himſelf, or rather in a man ſtark dead to reſtore himſelf to life: If I purpoſe to amend this or that which I finde to bee amiſs, I fail preſently,

ſently, and come ſhort of the accompliſhment of my deſire: Oh who is it then that is able to deliver mee from the body of this death? ſurely none but the Lord who hath made and faſhioned mee, to whom it belongs to kill, and quicken, heal and wound; to thee therefore oh Lord do I make my moan, to thee I render my humble petition, and pour out my ſoul which hath ſinned againſt thee: Oh Lord, I beſeech thee for thy infinite mercy in Jeſus Chriſt, to take pity upon mee, and to heal my ſoul which hath ſinned againſt thee; Waſh mee thorowly from mine iniquity, and cleanſe mee from my ſin; Convert mee oh Lord, and I ſhall be converted, ſet mee at liberty, and I ſhall run the race of thy Commandements. Open unto

to mee the fountain of grace for the washing away of my sin and uncleanness. It is thy property to have mercy, it is thy free covenant to write thy Law upon my heart. Thou hast promised to pour rivers of waters upon the dry and thirsty ground. Thou inviteſt the barren soul to come unto thee for ease and rest, O Lord have mercy upon mee, for in thee do I trust, thou art the well-spring of grace and mercy, the fountain of life, the author and preserver of grace, unto thee do I commend my soul, and upon thy merciful promise I will wait as long as I live.

Queſt. *Let the work of Redemption bee the eighth Instance, how are wee to proceed in Meditation on that work?*

Answ. In this work wee must consider the Author, Subject, Object,

Object, Causes, Ends, Parts and Properties, what is like, and what unlike.

To redeem is to deliver from bondage and misery, freely, or upon exchange; and to free from captivity by strong hand, or ransome; which two latter have place in the Redemption of man, in divers respects.

The Author of this great, admirable, and extraordinary work of Grace, is Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, who in time became man, and was made under the Law, that hee might redeem us that were under the Law: For this hee is called our Saviour, and Redeemer, or Redemption of his people, who doth deliver them from the hand of all their enemies, that they might serve the Lord without fear. Those that

God did raise up to redeem his people, as *Moses*, the Judges, yea those that redeemed as kinsmen this or that, were shadows of this our great Redeemer, who was in time to bee revealed. Christ hath satisfied revenging-justice, overcome Satan, killed sin, and purchased deliverance for his people that are given unto him of his Father, and such as beleeve in him are partakers of this Redemption in truth in this life, perfectly in the life to come: For from what time wee are ingrafted into Jesus Christ, by a soveraign, well-rooted, and all-seasoning Faith, wee are freed from being under the Law, and revenging-justice of God. The strong man is cast forth from what time Christ the stronger is entred. The conscience is made a sweet companion and comfor-

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ter, rather than a rigorous keeper. Where the King hath releaſed a Priſoner, the Jaylor can have no further power over him, for hee is but to keep him during the Kings pleaſure.

Again, By grace God doth ſet our wills at liberty, ſo that ſin cannot reign in us as heretofore; yea the world is crucified to us, and wee unto the world: For as when health cometh, a man beginneth to walk abroad, and do ſuch things as hee could not ſtir to do while his ſickneſs did keep him under: ſo it is here.

Finally wee are ſo freed, that we can ſuffer nothing which our wills have cauſe to be unwilling with, all things being ſuch as ſhal work together for our good.

Behold the rich grace, admirable love, and tender mercy of the Lord towards man in him-

ſelf moſt miſerable, rebellious, and worthy to bee caſt off for ever. *God ſo loved the world, that hee gave his only begotten Son, that whoſoever beleeveth in him, ſhould not periſh, but have everlaſting life.* Oh Lord, as our ſin and miſery abounded, thy mercy hath ſuperabounded. In mercy thou didſt provide a means for mans deliverance, that juſtice being ſatisfied, grace might bee glorious in his ſalvation: Oh God, when thou hadſt determined that juſtice ſhould take her revenge, if by breach of covenant ſhee bee wronged, thine infinite wiſdome found out a way to ſatisfie wronged juſtice; when all mankinde lay under the ſentence of condemnation, altogether unable to help themſelves, thine unſpeakable mercy did ſhew her ſelf for our deliverance;

rance; when man had nothing to pay for his Ranſome, nor any ſtrength to reſcue himſelf from the hands of juſtice, or the curſe of the Law, of thine endleſs love thou didſt give Chriſt to bee our Saviour, and by way of ranſome to redeem us: Oh my ſoul, thou art redeemed not with ſilver or gold, but with the blood of Chriſt, a lamb undefiled. This was it which in the blood of all the ſacrifices was prefigured: The death of Chriſt is it by means whereof Gods Grace doth ſet thee free, and that in moſt juſt manner. It doth pacifie juſtice her diſpleaſure againſt ſin: For God (that is) God as his Revenging Juſtice is gone forth, is ſaid to ſmell a ſavour of reſt in the death of Chriſt, and by Chriſts being put under the Law, or curſe of Gods

revenging made manifeſt in the Law, wee are ſaid to bee redeemed from the Law or curſe, as by an all-ſufficient Ranſome accepted of Juſtice. This death doth feee us from the Devil, for Satans power over us was by reaſon of ſin, and the puniſhment due to it from the Juſtice of God. By death hee deſtroyed him that had the power of executing death. The price of our Ranſome was paid to divine Juſtice; and it being paid and accepted, Satan was caſt down by ſtrong hand. This death hath obtained the Spirit to bee given thee, which doth free thee from
Gal. 4. 4, 5 the captivity of luſts, and enable thee to finde liberty in actions of godlineſs. Through this death thou haſt deliverance from all evils; So that all tears in Gods Time ſhall bee wiped from

from thine eyes, and in the mean while all thy sufferings are so changed, that they are not effects of Gods Revenging Justice to destroy, but such things in which God doth offer himself as a Father, intending to make thee partake further by means of them in the quiet fruit of Righteousnes. And now my soul, why hath the Lord done this for thee? that the Glory of his Grace might bee magnified in thy salvation, and thou mightest serve him all the daies of thy life. As for the parts of Redemption, it is purchased or possessed, and this begun or consummated in respect of guilt and punishment, or power and tyranny of sin. *Rome* was not built in a day. Great things are not begun and finished all at once. Redemption

takes not its full effect in this life, but it is so begun, that it shall certainly bee accomplished in due time.

The Properties of this deliverance will set forth the excellencies of it in some sort. It is true and real, as far excelling that Redemption of *Israel* out of the Land of *Egypt*, as the substance doth the shadow, the soul doth the body, and Christ did *Moses*. It is spiritual, from Sin, Satan, and the curse of the Law. The bondage of soul to the wrath of God, tyranny of Satan, and slavery of sin is most lamentable and grievous; and the more fearful the captivity, the more comfortable the deliverance.

Nor is this mercy vouchsafed to a few that live in some corner of the world, in some special age,

age, or time, which much leſſen the value of it; but it is univerſal, extended to all ages, to all ſorts of men, high and low, rich and poor. [a] *Thou haſt redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people,* and which is the upſhot of all, *this Redemption is eternal.* Hee that is ranſomed out of the power of a bodily enemy, may bee taken captive the ſecond time; but hee that is ſet free by Jeſus Chriſt, cannot bee captivated by Satan. It was a ſingular favour that God raiſed up Saviours to deliver them out of the hands of their oppreſſors: It is a much greater mercy that God hath given us Chriſt to ſet us free from ſpiritual thraldome; for that Redemption was typical, this real; that temporal of the body, this ſpiritual of the ſoul,

[a] Apoc. 5. 9

Heb. 9. 12.

soul, and conscience: That from the cruelty of man, this from the tyranny of Satan; that thraldome would have ended with life, this bondage would ever have increased daily: After that deliverance they might and did return to bondage, But in this Redemption, hee that is once freed, abideth a freeman for evermore; Those Saviours were meer men, but Christ our Redeemer is God and Man; They delivered their people by force of arms, but Christ by his death first payed the price of our Redemption, and then God by his great power rescued us from the hands of the Devil: They brought their Redeemed into an earthly *Canaan*, but Christ our Redeemer hath prepared for us an heavenly Inheritance. They saved them that were

were oppreſſed, and evil-intreated againſt their wills; but Chriſt ſet us free, who had voluntarily ſold our ſelves into the ſtate of ſlavery.

Queſt. *How are theſe things to bee applied unto the heart?*

Anſw. Upon conſideration of theſe things, wee muſt ſtir up our ſelves to ſeek the knowledge of Chriſt Jeſus; fly unto him with ſound affiance, rejoyce in God, and ſing praiſes to his name: Oh my ſoul, is deliverance from ſpiritual thraldome to bee found in Jeſus Chriſt, then enquire after him, and ſeek to know him with gladneſs. The Name Jeſus is ſweet, honey in the mouth, melody in the ear, a Jubile in the heart. What a ſervant were hee that knew not his Maſters Name? is not hee unworthy the benefit of Redemption,

demption, that will not vouchsafe to enquire who hath paid his Ransome? Oh my soul, fly unto Christ in whom thou shalt finde deliverance from all spiritual thraldome. God hath made Christ an *Adam*, Head, Root, Store-house, in-whom are treasured all those good things, which from him are communicated unto us: Wee love to thrust amongst them with whom wee may finde benefit, and profit; Seek this above all, that thou mayest bee by Faith in Christ. Should Bankrupts hear of any that should answer their creditors for them, they would quickly resort to him: how much more shouldest thou resort to this Mediatour, and Surety, who will answer the debt of those that come unto him by Faith? seek to bee ingrafted into

into him, ſtrive by Faith to grow up in him: for the more nearly wee are united with any thing, the more wee partake of the virtue, and operation of it. Thoſe that are neareſt the fire, partake in the heat of it more than thoſe that are further removed. Thou ſeeſt men ſeek to bee made one perſon in law, to bee moſt nearly joyned to ſuch as may bring them in wealth: Oh my ſoul, why doſt thou not ſeek more earneſtly by a ſpiritual marriage to become one with him in whom is every good bleſſing: Behold hee ſueth unto thee, not that hee might bee enriched by thee, for thou haſt nothing to give, hee ſtands in need of nothing, but that hee might anſwer thy debt, ſet thee at liberty, adorn thee with grace, and endow thee with eternal life. O my

ſoul,

ſoul, what great cauſe haſt thou to love the Lord, and rejoyce in his mercy! God hath given his Son to dye for us, before we asked it: Chriſt hath (when wee could not through our graceleſneſs once ask him) fulfilled all Righteouſneſs, and diſcharged us from the danger of ſin. Wee take it as love in men, if ſpoken to, they will do ſmall matters for us; Hee that will bear a blow for us in our behalf, bee bound for us in great ſumms of mony, ſpecially hee that will lye by it for our good: But how much more art thou to acknowledge this grace of Chriſt, who hath been thy Surety, paid for thy deliverance, not ſilver or gold, but his precious blood? The inſenſible creatures are called upon to rejoyce for the Redemption of Gods people; when they

they were redeemed from *Babel*, the joy did put them into an extasie, they knew not whether they were asleep or awake: But this spiritual Redemption doth as far out-strip that temporal freedome, as Heaven is above the Earth, or hell worse than the house of bondage. *Sing unto the Lord, oh my soul, make a joyful noise unto the God of thy salvation.* What cause hast thou to praise him, who hath visited and redeemed thee with such a Redemption? Thou mayest remember the day when thou wast in thraldome to the burning wrath of God, and stoodest under the condemnation of the Law, when it was death to bee held to the duties of godlines, in which is the exercise of true freedome; and sin did hold thee so fast, that though thou sawest

the

the miſchief of it, and propoſedſt ſometimes a new courſe, yet thou couldeſt not return to it as before, when this luſt and that paſſion did tyrannize over thee, and fears of conſcience, and death did hold thee in thraldome: But now the Lord hath looked upon thee in mercy, his wrath is appeaſed, the Law is anſwered, Satan is caſt down, and thou art received into ſpecial favour to walk with him. Oh Lord, I am aſhamed that I ſhould bee ſo ſenſeleſs at the remembrance of this unſpeakable love, ſo forgetful of this undeſerved kindneſs; move the ſcales from mine eyes, I pray thee, and take the veil from my heart, which will not let mee rejoyce in ſo excellent mercy.

Queſt. *Shew how wee muſt proceed in Meditation on the Reſurrection of Chriſt?* *Anſ.*

Anſ. Wee muſt conſider the Subject, Antecedents, Cauſes, End, Time, Place, and things that happened with it, the effects, properties, and conſequents, what is like, and what unlike.

My ſoul deſires to think upon the Reſurrection of Chriſt, in which I may behold the reconciled face of God. Dear Father, direct my mind, rightly to conceive of this high myſtery, to the glory of thy Name, and the comfort of my ſoul: To riſe from the ſleep of ſin, is to leave or deſiſt from evil. Hee that is fallen proſtrate, ariſeth when he gathers up himſelf. Hee that layeth himſelf down to reſt, ariſeth when hee is raiſed from ſleep. Hee that is dead ariſeth when the ſoul is knit to the body: The Reſurrection of Chriſt

is the first degree of his exaltation, wherein the soul being united again to his body, hee was raised up to spiritual and immortal life. It is a motion partly natural, partly supernatural; Natural in respect of the subject, bound, and means. For Christ rose so out of the grave, that hee is said to bee there no more, and he rose by means proper to a natural body, that being removed which might seem to hinder. Nor was this Resurrection in a moment but in certain succession of time, which is required to every natural motion. Nevertheless this motion is supernatural, in respect of the cause, efficient, and the end: The Divine Nature of Christ could not suffer, nor dye, nor rise again; but hee was raised to life in respect of that nature that

died

died for our sins, or in respect of the body, which for a time was separated from the soul, and laid in the grave. This was prefigured by types, foretold by the Prophets of the Old Testament, and most clearly spoken to his Disciples by our Saviour himself, signifying unto them that the Son of Man must suffer at *Jerusalem*, and bee buried, and the third day rise again.

The principal cause of the Resurrection, was the Divine Nature, most strictly united with the Humanity: In Scripture this work is ascribed to the Father, * who is said to raise his Son; and to the Son, [a] *who by his Divine power*, or as the Apostle speaketh, *by the eternal Spirit raised up himself. I have power to lay down my life, and I have power to take it:* Of his infinite

* Act. 2. 24.
[a] Rom. 1. 4. Joh. 10. 18

love towards his Elect, hee laid down his life, and of the same love and affection toward them, hee rose again, which is more evidently seen in this, that hee did vouchsafe to call them brethren; with which sweet name, full of love hee had not before saluted any man. As hee suffered the most grievous torment for the salvation of the Elect his chosen people, so for the glorification of his Spouse, that is, the Church, hee rose again that hee might inrich and beautifie her with spoils, taken from the enemy.

The Causes lead us to consider of the End, why Christ rose again, for every proper efficient, intendeth an end which is ever good, and that most excellent as the worker is of greatest wisdome and excellency: Now there-

therefore, since Christ rose in special love to his peculiar people, it must needs tend to their special exceeding great good: By his Resurrection the glory of Christ which hee had with the Father (before the foundation of the world) was manifested, which the world would not acknowledge by his Sermons, nor by miracles confirming his Doctrine. By his Resurrection he obtained those glorious Titles with which the Prophets foretold that the *Messias* should bee adorned: such as bee; *The Prince of life, the first-fruits of them that sleep, the first-born of every creature, the first-born from the dead, and the first-begotten of the dead; and the Lord of Dead and Living.* By his Resurrection hee shewed himself to bee the Conquerour of Death, Sin, Act. 3. 15. 1 Cor. 15. 20. Col. 1. 15, 18. Apoc. 1. 5. Rom. 14. 9

and Satan; meritoriously hee triumphed over our enemies upon the Crosse; actually hee began his triumph at the Resur-
Col. 2. 23, rection. Now when the powers
24. of Hell could no longer hold him under, it is manifest that they are subdued, and conquered. By his Resurrection hee declareth that his satisfaction is fully absolute. Had the least penny of our debt remained upon the score not discharged, hee could not have loosed the sorrows of Death. *Christ died for our sins, and rose again for our justification.* By the Resurrection hee prepared himself to the glorious function of a Mediatour. As hee suffered without the gate to pay the price of our Redemption: So did hee enter into Heaven to appear before the Father for us. Hee died once

for

for our sins, and now liveth for ever to make intercession for us. By his death hee purchased life and salvation for his people, and now sitting in glory at the right hand of the Father, hee doth communicate the blessing that hee hath procured for them. Christ rose, that wee might rise: *For hee that raised up the Lord Jesus, shall raise up us with Jesus*, and set us together with him. 2 Cor. 4. 14.

Early in the morning upon the third day after hee was buried, our Saviour rose out of the Sepulchre in which hee was laid, at which time there was a mighty Earthquake, and an Angel descended from Heaven to rowl away the stone, at which glorious apparition, the souldiers that kept the Tomb were sore affraid, and became as dead men.

The death of Christ wanted not signs of Majesty, nor his Resurrection tokens of exceeding glory: when the Earth was moved at his presence, and the Angels descended from Heaven to do him service. The effects of this Resurrection are far more glorious than the signs that did accompany it: for unless his Resurrection had followed his cruel death, all his benefits appropriated to us had layen buried together with him. The Resurrection of Christ is a notable confirmation of his Doctrine, the abolition of sin and death, regeneration unto life eternal; and vivification of our bodies are the fruits of it. It was necessary that Christ should rise, in regard of the excellency of his person, for being the proper Son of God, it was impossible hee

1 Cor. 15. 17. Rom. 6. 8, 9. 1 Cor. 15. 55. 1 Pet. 1. 3. 1 Cor. 15. 21, 22.

hee ſhould bee held of the ſorrows of death; being juſt and innocent as man, it could not bee that hee ſhould lye under the power of the grave, and dying to overcome, hee could not bee vanquiſhed of the enemies. It was alſo neceſſary in reſpect of the Covenant hee had made with the Father, the dignity of his high office of eternal Mediation, and that the truth of thoſe things which were foretold concerning the glory of the *Meſsias* might bee fulfilled: Many admirable things are ſpoken touching the *Meſsias*, and the glory of his Kingdome, who was firſt to lay down his life, and then to take poſſeſſion of his Kingdome in glory; where hee ſhall live for ever to make interceſſion for his people, which hee could not have done if hee had not riſen.

riſen. It cannot bee that the Word of God ſhould take none effect, but it was foretold that the *Meßias* ſhould riſe again, in which reſpect his Reſurrection was neceſſary. Chriſt not as a private perſon, but as a publick perſon. Hee died for his Elect, and virtually they roſe in him, when hee roſe from the dead, of whoſe Reſurrection they partake actually, when by lively Faith they are made one with him.

This Reſurrection was exceeding glorious, in reſpect of the power by which it was effected, the life into which hee roſe, and the things that accompanied, or followed after the Reſurrection: For the graves did open, and many bodies of them that ſlept in the earth, aroſe. Whereby the grave

grave did witnesse, that its power was taken away, and clean vanquished.

Jonah's deliverance out of the Whales belly was wonderful and miraculous; the Lord was gracious in sparing *Isaac*, and raising him as it were from death, who was a slain Sacrifice in his Fathers account. But these were only types, and shadows of Christ, his Resurrection the life and glory of the other.

The elect and faithful shall rise to glory at the day of judgement, but they shall rise by the power of Christ. Christ arose by his own power: they shall rise as the Members of Christ, but Christ rose as the first-fruits of them that sleep: they shall rise as private persons, but Christ arose as a publick:

They

They ſhall ariſe from corruption, but Chriſt his body did not ſee corruption: They ſhall riſe to immortality and glory for themſelves, but Chriſt roſe to glory that hee might govern his Church in glory, and bring his Elect unto himſelf, that where hee is, there they might bee for ever.

Queſt: *How are theſe things to bee preſſed upon the heart?*

Anſw. Wee muſt ſtir up our ſelves to behold and rejoyce in the Lords love towards us; and fly unto Chriſt by Faith, that wee might feel the power of his Reſurrection quickening us to newneſs of life, and comfort our ſelves againſt the fear of death, and rotting in the grave, with an aſſured hope of Reſurrection to immortality, and eternal glory.

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